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THE NECESSITY FOR OFFICIAL CONTROL OVER ARCHITECTURE IN OUR TOWNS AND CITIES.

By WILLIAM EMERSON, *President R.I.B.A.*

THE period of the most extraordinary and spontaneous revival in the art of architecture during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, known as the Renaissance, had been preceded by a wave of great interest in the advance of learning, culture, and knowledge. The century now at its close has been one also of unprecedented advance in all branches of learning, culture, and science. It has also been marked by many indications of a revived interest in architecture.

This interest seems, however, to have been confined mainly to individuals, or small associated bodies of cultivated architects, archæologists, and artists. In fact, since the Renaissance in England, which followed hard on the heels of that in Italy, architecture seems to have been steadily on the decline. The strong Classical movement in the earlier years of the century, and the enthusiastic outburst of Gothic revival later on, were however indications of the existence of some amongst us who recognised the importance of a fitting national architecture being evolved if our Metropolis and large provincial towns were ever to be worthy of the great British Empire. But the public interest in architecture is evidenced by the quality of the designs they appear to be contented with, and is exemplified by the numerous extraordinary conceptions seen in our streets and public places. Nevertheless there is an undoubted undercurrent of interest in, as well as growth in knowledge and appreciation of artistic architecture, which is fostered by many of the professional journals.

These reflections cause one to consider how it is that with all our increase of knowledge, all our growing interest in art, and all our opportunities of study and travel in other countries, our streets should be so replete with staring incongruities, uglinesses, ignorances, and want of refinement.

One cannot help feeling that the following have been some of the reasons of this anomaly:—

(a) Ignorance and want of proper education of the public and the architects in artistic matters.

(b) Lack of public interest in the subject, causing unwillingness to spend money on architecture, and the mercantile desire to build as quickly as possible, in order to avoid pecuniary loss from rent or otherwise.

(c) Lack of control by competent educated authorities, either governmental or municipal,

or estate agency, whereby at least the erection of palpable architectural enormities might be prevented.

In regard to (a) and (b), degeneration in architecture may have set in with the dying-out of the art and craft associations which in former years, both under the Church and guilds, exercised authority in architecture and art knowledge, and so carried out many of the important buildings in almost every country; these guilds handed down from father to son in successive generations what was known of the arts—as, in fact, takes place in the East at the present time.

This system died, and with it their traditional art knowledge declined. Coming to our own times, undoubted improvement in regard to education in art is taking place every day. The Royal Institute of British Architects' Examinations now promote study on the part of the rising members of the profession, while the education of the general public is so many-sided nowadays that even architecture claims some attention. But it is the third point, as to the desirability of control in respect to the design of our new buildings, to which I wish mainly to draw attention.

Could ancient Rome ever have developed the magnificence in architecture that its works reveal had there not been some sort of control over the artistic as well as the constructive side of their buildings? If Augustus boasted that he found Rome of brick and left it of marble; and if the magnificence of Vespasian, the genius of Trajan, and the cultivated taste of Hadrian conceived and accomplished the noble works of their reigns, they evidently exercised a certain control over the embellishment of the imperial city. History tells us that it was the duty of the Pro-consuls in ancient Rome and the provinces of the Empire to supply the deficiencies of the citizens in their building operations, to direct their taste, and sometimes to moderate their emulation with each other. The emulations of our citizens scarcely require much moderating in this respect now. The Romans were, however, apparently uncontrolled in regard to their private houses, and the modest simplicity of these proved their freedom in this respect.

In our day it is also not so much in private dwellings that artistic control seems necessary as in semi-public buildings and business houses in our streets. During the Renaissance public taste and opinion had a controlling influence over architecture and art, for even the production of a new statue, if fine, was made the occasion of public ovation and rejoicing.

Public taste and opinion now have little influence; but the necessity of some competent control over the art of architecture is felt not only by many in England, but also in all parts of the civilised world. And as a proof of this feeling in France a book by a French architect, M. Gustav Kahn, is now, I understand, being published on this very subject; and the matter is to be discussed at the International Congress of Architects to be held in Paris during the Exhibition. Most countries have control over the designs and construction of their public governmental and municipal buildings; but over private buildings facing on public streets and places, there appears to be hardly anywhere any other control than that affecting constructive or hygienic matters, or widths of streets and general heights.

The question is how some efficient control—affecting not only the constructive, but the artistic design of public as well as private buildings—could be obtained, and whether or not such a control would be advantageous.

In France, to quote the words of our late Secretary, Mr. William H. White, the Council of Building in Paris, the principle of which was first initiated by Colbert in 1663, has existed in some form or other since his day. In 1798 this Council, under another name and in altered form, took for a time the name of "Assemblée Centrale des Architectes," and consisted of seven architects. Later on a Councillor of State was appointed president, but

the vice-president was always an architect. In 1898 this Council was extended to twenty-four in number, of whom fifteen were architects, and their duties were increased. The members of the Council were not permitted to design or execute new works under the Administration. They had the final judgment as to designs submitted in competition for public buildings. They also advised as to the selection of architects for new public works; and since then this Council has had the supreme control of all public works, there being numerous divisions—which I need not now go into—for the efficient control of the various departments of works. All were placed under the charge of a Minister at the head of the *Maison de l'Empereur et des Beaux-Arts*. The responsible chief of each division of public works was advised by committees of experts. I believe, unless any alteration has been made lately, the functions of Supreme Director of Works are divided between (a) the Minister of Public Instruction and Fine Arts, (b) the Minister of Justice and Public Works, (c) the Prefect of the Seine, (d) the Prefect of Police. The Minister of Public Instruction and Fine Arts, the Minister of Justice and Public Works, and the Prefect of the Seine are all advised in matters of architecture and building by councils or committees, of whom a large proportion are architects. The Prefect of Police, whose duties are mainly in connection with the safety of the public in respect to buildings in public streets, &c., is assisted by a number of architects, the Inspectors-General being men of high distinction in the profession.

This systematic organisation has been responsible for some of the best and most beautiful buildings in Paris, and appears, in respect of public edifices, to give satisfactory results, and has undoubtedly influenced the national architecture of France. This control is exercised always over a design for a building which has to be carried out with the aid of funds contributed wholly or in part by a public body; but in France, when it is a question of private buildings, the control of municipal authorities is only extended over such matters as widths of streets, heights of buildings, and hygiene, but in no way over artistic matters. In fact, M. Lucas informs me of a case some years ago proving how little voice the authorities have in such matters. The story is as follows:—

A house-owner at Chantilly, wishing to force the owner of a house situated opposite his own upon the public road to quit the district, painted the façade of his own house black, with death's-heads and cross-bones picked out in white. This led to a series of actions and appeals in courts of law, with the result in the end that the owner of this grisly façade had to wipe it all out and repaint it in the usual manner. But the judgment had nothing whatever to do with the question of art in regard to street architecture or in reference to public taste, but solely on the ground of damage done to his neighbour by hindering the letting of his premises.

In Berlin and Germany generally, also, though I believe there is Government control over public buildings, and though there are building regulations and legal restrictions in the matter of private construction of buildings, these have nothing to do with æsthetic considerations. Every proprietor has a right to occupy his property with buildings or alter his buildings, but no building is permitted to the damage or the insecurity of the public or the disfigurement of towns and open spaces. In regard to the word "disfigurement," in legal proceedings which have been taken to prevent the erection of unsuitable edifices the judges have invariably dismissed the cases, on the ground that matters of taste are purely individual. But I am informed by one of the leading Berlin architects that this defect is felt very much and will shortly be remedied, and counsel is being taken as to the scope of such legal restrictions. This matter, which is under consideration, can scarcely be brought to a conclusion this year.

In Austria I find there is no control over new buildings in respect of their æsthetic properties—only over construction.

In Denmark there is also no control over taste or design—only in construction and other kindred matters; and the lawyers there strongly uphold the unlimited right of an owner to build whatever he pleases, provided it be in conformity with the law.

But the disregard of the public's just claim for beauty of design has been severely censured in the Common Council of Copenhagen; and the opinion expressed there has influenced the magistracy to such an extent that now in most deeds of conveyance whereby the community sells land for building purposes the stipulation is made that the drawings for the exterior of their buildings are to be submitted to the magistracy, who then seek the opinion and advice of the city architect, and generally decide according to his advice.

To this scheme there are many drawbacks. When the community is the greatest land-owner, as in Copenhagen, it may affect many, if not most, of the buildings; but even then, when incompetent architects are chosen by the building owners, and the design is submitted after the sale is completed, very little can be gained by the alteration and correction of unsatisfactory drawings, or by the absolute refusal of them; and their approval, if the alterations, as is usually the case, involve more outlay of capital, naturally raises objections on the part of the building owners. Were it possible for the designs to be submitted previous to conclusion of the bargain for the land, a much more effective control over the design could be exercised. Lately this has caused a movement for a revised building Act, which shall have clauses giving power to the building Commission to refuse consent to the carrying-out of a design that would disfigure the street or place in which it is to be erected. But whether such a clause will be carried is uncertain, for there again the question must arise as to what disfigurement entails or means.

In Italy control of buildings is a municipal affair. Each city elects a Council, called the "Commissione Edilizia," whose mission is to examine every building project, whether for a new construction or for an alteration to an existing structure, and to uphold the interests of the public from the standpoint of beauty. They have to examine the plans from an æsthetic point of view, and if in their judgment the execution of the project would disfigure the city they are bound to refuse their sanction to it.

This Committee, the "Commissione Edilizia," has also the power to grant exemption from the building regulations in case what is termed the "ornato pubblico" should require it; for instance, in the matter of heights.

The Pope's Government has always desired to go one step better to secure improvements in the aspect of the city. Leo XII. granted that whoever should build, or rebuild, or restore a house from designs approved by the St. Luke's Academy of Fine Arts should be exempt for thirty-three years from an increase in property tax—a most just and wise measure for the encouragement of citizens to erect handsome buildings.

In Russia I learn that every governing institution has its own building officer and architects, who are responsible for its buildings. But the latest innovation is that designs for all important buildings requiring artistic skill shall be examined by the Council of the Academy of Art; but until now many exceptions have been made to this rule, and in consequence, I am told, barbarism often reigns in many of the buildings.

In America, in New York and Boston, art commissions exist, consisting of persons appointed by the mayors, and of those who hold certain positions at the head of certain public institutions, and the law provides that no work of art shall be accepted by the city government or erected in the streets or public places without the approval of the respective commissions. This applies, however, more to fountains, statues, monuments, and such like, than to buildings, excepting that within certain limits a building paid for by public funds may be altered, modified, or controlled by the commissions.

It seems, therefore, that Italy alone has any real control in the public interest over the artistic design of buildings, and this is exercised by committees in each city.

There can be no doubt that in England, as well as in all other civilised countries, great and important steps have been taken of late years in the way of control over building operations in matters affecting the public welfare, such as constructive details, hygiene, and sanitary questions, and possibly it is to be expected that these should take precedence over matters of taste and beauty. But the more educated public seems now to be justly discontented with the effect of many of our buildings and the way in which town improvements and public works are conceived and carried out; and there is no doubt a growing desire that some sort of control as to the æsthetic side of architecture should be exercised by competent authorities, at least in respect of our public streets and places. But how to exercise such a control is a very difficult question. So long ago as the year 1881, when the late Mr. George Edmund Street was President of the Institute, he drew attention to a number of flagrant cases of mismanagement in regard to our national monuments, and to the selection of sites and arrangement and laying-out of certain public buildings, bridges, streets, and their approaches, and then argued that all pointed to the necessity for the creation of a Government Ministry of Fine Arts, which should have a supervising eye and control over all our national monuments and collections, and also over new edifices, city improvements, and rearrangements. The late Lord Leighton observed that much might be said in favour of some scheme for checking the production of ugliness in this country, but he expressed the fear that many and grave difficulties would beset the carrying-out of any such scheme, and I have reason to believe that one of the chief difficulties he saw was that in the event of such a Ministry being established, and having by chance a dictatorial head, it might eventuate in one man's architecture, resulting in a monotonous effect in our towns.

This subject constantly recurring, and attracting the notice not only of architects, sculptors, and artists, but also of some of the educated public, seems to show that it is a measure which must eventually find its way into practical politics; and surely, as it is of Imperial interest, and would undoubtedly be for the good of the greatest number, it ought to do so.

Let us consider for a moment some of the points for and against such high authoritative control. Some of the points in its favour would be:

I. That such a controlling body, composed of fully qualified men of artistic perception, would prevent the erection of new public buildings, such as our Law Courts and the Admiralty, on sites insufficient, not only as regards the requisite accommodation, but as regards æsthetic effect, in the interest of what the Italians call the "*ornato pubblico*."

II. That the laying-out of open spaces, public places, and their approaches would be considered by properly qualified and competent experts and judges, rather than, as is often the case, by incompetent persons, often under the orders of uneducated tradesmen who for the moment may fill the seats of our councils, vestries, or local governing bodies.

III. That such schemes as the two bridges at Blackfriars, erected on totally different principles and lines, within a few yards of each other, would be rendered impossible, and, when necessary, proper designs for new bridges, engineering and architecture going hand in hand, would be assured.

IV. That when schemes for new streets, &c., such as the Strand Improvements, lately before the public, or Northumberland Avenue, or Charing Cross Road, or Shaftesbury Avenue, were under consideration, some general plan and design would be arranged, and the talent of our best men obtained, under fair remunerative terms, and they would be responsible to such a controlling power for the proper carrying-out of the architecture of the scheme, and

tenants would be unable to erect whatever uglinesses and incongruities their uneducated tastes might prompt.

V. That the taste of the public would gradually be elevated and improved, the man who wished to disfigure the town for selfish ends would be reprobated, and eventually our town architecture would become the glory of our nation, and architects who were not artists also would gradually cease to obtain work.

VI. That the more education increases, the more a definite control of some sort seems necessary, because posterity has some interest and right in the taste of its forefathers, and we should build not only for the present, but for the future.

VII. That such a control need not mean, under a properly constituted Ministry or Commission, monotonous uniformity of design—one man's architecture; but the juxtaposition of inharmonious designs, materials, and colours would be prevented, and a general harmony with plenty of variety would be ensured.

VIII. That at present architects' powers are often limited in dealing with strong, self-willed, and selfish clients who have no feeling for the fitness of things and are deficient in taste. This should not be the case. For example, should an architect refuse to erect for such a client a huge stone building apparently supported entirely by plate-glass windows, he would be punished by losing the work, and some less conscientious person would unhesitatingly do it. Such a thing would, under control, be out of the building owner's power; the architect would be able to say, "Such a design would not pass the Ministry of Fine Art, therefore it is useless my attempting it."

Some of the points that might be urged against such a control are:

I. The politician would probably say that this would be Collectivism as against Individualism, and would interfere with and restrict the rights of owners in regard to their properties; and, on the ground that there is no accounting for taste (*de gustibus non est disputandum*), he might have some show of reason on his side. But if this were for the national good in matters of taste I cannot see that it would be worse than interfering with freedom in construction and hygienic matters for the good of the public safety and health.

II. It would be urged that it would increase the difficulties of letting land for building purposes; but were it the general rule such a complaint would soon cease, and the inevitable would become the good.

III. At present many boroughs and corporations give their architectural work to their engineer or surveyor, and therefore would object to this control. Often these men are quite incompetent for the proper carrying-out of such buildings; but as the arrangement saves an architect's fee the public love to have it, and the ratepayers vote for it, in their ignorance not understanding that eventually they will be the sufferers.

IV. Some architects might raise objections to such a control as involving the trouble of getting their designs passed, not only by one set of authorities on constructive and other matters, but by another body on the ground of "*ornato publico*" (I use the words for want of an English phrase equally expressive). This might be a serious difficulty to many who profess to be architects without possessing the needful artistic taste. That class would die out under such a *régime*.

V. The ratepayers would object to it as adding to taxation; for such a controlling body of experts should be highly remunerated.

VI. Then, again, it may be urged that it has never been the custom to interfere with personal tastes in regard to building on private property, even though it be in our public streets and thoroughfares.

But though custom has been against such a control, it may have been merely the

antiquity of error—as Cyprian said in speaking of custom, that the fact of its being the custom is no warrant for its existence. The increasing aggregation of population in large centres needs increasing regulation in all matters of public and social interest; and if customs have grown up of which time has proved the unwisdom, then, however ancient, let them be eradicated.

There are probably many other points both in favour of and against such a control which could be pointed out. But on the whole it seems to me that if the larger considerations of public education, culture, Imperial demands, and our national character and taste as they will appear in the eyes of posterity, are weighed in the balance of common-sense with the smaller considerations of individual right in matters of taste or property or greed, cost to rate-payers, custom, or inconvenience to the inferior architect, the latter will easily kick the beam.

But were such a control established, the question arises, How should such a body be constituted? Clearly there should be a responsible head of the department, were he a Government Minister or not, and he should be chosen not only for his administrative or political capacities, but for his known possession of cultivated taste, large Imperial ideas, and love of art, combined with practical common-sense; and he should not have the power to overrule the Committee's decision, of which he would be president.

It goes without saying that the Committee should be formed of the best men amongst our Royal Academicians, Royal Institute of Architects, and other artistic societies.

The view of a majority of such a Committee should be final in all schemes, public or private, which affected the “*ornato publico*.”

For our Metropolis, in which the whole Empire is interested, such a controlling body should, I imagine, be a Government Ministry of Fine Arts; while each provincial town or county council should have the right to elect its own committee. I suppose each such body should be paid from rates raised in the district under its control. But these are details apart from the large general question of necessity for control.

These suggestions, however crudely put my ideas may be, please to understand, I have made solely with the view of eliciting discussion, and in the sincere hope that our governing authorities at no distant date may see their way to inaugurate the new century with some project whereby the future architecture of our country may not be left to mere chance or the caprice of irresponsible individuals; but that under a wise control the architecture of the greatest Empire the world has ever seen may not in the future suffer by comparison with that of other civilised countries of the present time, or indeed with that of nations of bygone ages.

DISCUSSION.

SIR JOHN TAYLOR, K.C.B. [F.], in proposing a vote of thanks to the President for his Address, said their thanks were due to him for the trouble he had taken in obtaining information as to existing rules and regulations in regard to control over designs for public buildings in other countries. He (the speaker) had for many years been intimately interested in one of the subjects (probably the most important) with which the President had dealt, viz. control over the erection of national buildings. The tendency of the President's remarks was towards a mild criticism of the buildings erected by the Government in recent times. While he fully sympathised with the suggestions, he did not admit that, at all events during the past few years, the Government had been luke-

warm in regard to the designs of public buildings. It was no doubt true that in some cases the result had not been quite satisfactory; but the reasons for such partial failures were more of a political nature than from the absence of satisfactory designs, and so long as decisions in matters of this kind rested with Parliament and Parliamentary Committees much uncertainty would exist in regard to them. He had some doubt as to whether the recommendations of such a body as that suggested in the Paper would meet with a better fate than those made by the Office of Works, which had been more than once set aside. In the most recent case the Government had had the assistance of the Royal Institute of British Architects in the selection of the architects invited to

erect new public offices, and in taking that course the result had been very much what the President had been asking for. It had to be borne in mind that buildings were required for specific business purposes, and the requirements of the case frequently operated against a design being as monumental in character as desired; while, on the other hand, instances could be given where the architectural treatment of the exterior had been given precedence to such an extent as to make the buildings unsuitable for their purposes. With regard to the President's remarks that a controlling body would prevent the erection of public buildings, such as our Law Courts and the Admiralty, on insufficient sites, the President appeared to be under some misapprehension, as in the case of the Admiralty at all events the site was amply sufficient for the purpose if properly used.

Mr. WILLIAM WOODWARD [A.], who seconded the vote of thanks, said he could not agree with the last speaker, who appeared to think that the committee who considered the designs for the new buildings in Whitehall corresponded to the committee proposed by the President. The committee referred to by Sir John Taylor only applied to the Office of Works, whereas the President's suggestion applied to the whole country. The difficulty in regard to the suggestions of the President was as to the question of taste. He supposed that the committee would not lay down any hard and fast rule as to designs being Classic, Renaissance, Gothic, or Queen Anne; he took it that there was no desire to exercise any control in matters like that. All that would be required would be that buildings should be of as high a form of art as possible in the circumstances. The absence of control was manifest in such a structure as the railway bridge at Ludgate Hill, which interfered so seriously with the view of St. Paul's. Had there been a committee such as that proposed, that bridge would never have been built, nor would the addition to King's College, which interfered so seriously with a building under the control of the Office of Works, viz. Somerset House. Nor would Queen Anne's Mansions have been permitted. As to the railway companies, the Great Central Railway could have had a site in Chapel Street, Edgware Road, which would have been ample for its requirements; instead of that they selected and spoilt one of the finest parts of London, and a committee like that proposed would have prevented the monstrosities which had been perpetrated at St. John's Wood. Last year sub-committees of the House of Lords were considering additions to Charing Cross Railway Station and Victoria Station, and it was very much to be hoped that something would be done to prevent a repetition of what he had referred to at St. John's Wood. He might add a word as to hoardings. There was nothing in the Building Act, or any Act relating to London, to prevent a

man erecting a hoarding so long as it was on his own site, and of making that hoarding permanent, and so disfiguring the street; and a committee like that proposed might be able to prevent such a thing.

Sir JOHN TAYLOR said that King's College buildings, where the hideous structure referred to by Mr. Woodward had been erected, were not in charge of the Office of Works, and the Office of Works did all it could to prevent the addition being made.

Mr. WILLIAM YOUNG [F.] said the matter deserved most serious consideration. It was no doubt true that buildings which, to say the least, were eccentric, and which spoilt the whole effect of a street, were frequently to be met with, and seemed to indicate the need for some sort of control. Charing Cross Road, for instance, was a lost opportunity, while the Embankment from Westminster Bridge to Waterloo Bridge (one of the finest lines of street in the world) had been very much spoilt; there was no attempt at harmony anywhere, and what might have been a magnificent improvement to the city was spoilt for the want of some sort of control. The greatest offenders were the railway companies and public bodies, and if control over the artistic character of buildings were obtained he hoped it would be mainly limited to railway companies and public bodies; for in London there was a good deal of control over the individual. On the Westminster and Cadogan estates—in fact, on all the great London estates—designs had to be submitted and approved. In competitions, again, there was control—indeed, he thought, generally speaking, there was quite enough control; an architect wanted a certain amount of freedom in his designs, and the control that he needed was *self-control*. There was no doubt that architects should consider more than they did the design and character of the building adjoining the site they were going to build on. But a design came under the control of the Building Act and of the Vestries, and if, in addition, it had to come under the control of a Minister of Fine Arts, and had to be altered about to suit that gentleman's requirements, it would hardly be recognised as the product of the architect, and control, carried so far, was undesirable. Instead of a controlling body, why should there not be an advising body? Altogether he felt it was "better to bear the ills we have than fly to others that we know not of."

Mr. E. W. HUDSON [A.] said the key of the whole matter was the question of taste, as to which there was no standard. Who was to decide, when even in the same epoch educated people were not able to agree in matters of taste? The President seemed to imply that homogeneity was what was wanted; that idea was carried out in Regent Street, but could we take that as an example to be imitated? Was it not a fact that the charm

of mediæval towns, such as Nuremberg, Bruges, &c., and our own cathedral towns, was due to the variety of elevations met with? It was quite possible to go to the other extreme. Railway companies were great sinners, and their power was very great. It had been suggested that the bridge at Ludgate Hill would never have been erected had there been public control in design; but he did not think so; though if commercial interests were not so powerful it might be possible to let questions of taste have more consideration. Some kind of control of public buildings had been exercised in the South of London with more or less success. When the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway extension was proposed, certain opposition was brought to bear on the company by the Dulwich College trustees, the owners of some of the land. The company had to submit for approval the designs for viaducts and stations, and, so far as it was possible to make engineering designs artistic, it was done in this case; but where there were many small owners, as in London, it was impossible to exercise such control. What was the existing state of things in London? Every designer followed his own bent with little or no control. In case of public buildings the R.I.B.A. or individuals might offer alternatives to ugliness; but if they got a hearing public opinion had no power to prevent that ugliness or unsuitability being perpetrated. There was no means of obtaining a vote, no authority to enforce it. The Law Courts competition was won, he believed, on the merits of planning, and yet what dissatisfaction arose when it was carried out! Could it be said that the approval of designs by the late Metropolitan Board of Works and the London County Council in new streets had secured architectural effects of which we were proud? How was the desirable control to be effected? Certainly not by appointing a Minister of Civil Architecture and then ignoring his decisions, nor a Surveyor-General to give advice merely to be rejected, as was the late Mr. Fergusson's experience twenty years ago. It seemed as if we wanted a Colbert in England to settle the matter. A single official was not a satisfactory solution when we remembered that it was Lord Palmerston's interference that made Sir Gilbert Scott carry out a Classic instead of a Gothic building at Whitehall. Surely it ought not to be impossible to have a tribunal of three to represent Classic and Gothic styles and decorative detail respectively, to adjudicate upon designs for public buildings and civil architecture in our towns and cities, with appeal to a Minister of Fine Arts in the capital.

Mr. ZEPH. KING [F.] said that in Nuremberg, where he was much struck with the picturesqueness of the buildings, he was informed that when an old building was pulled down it was necessary, in erecting a new structure on the site, that it should

be of the same character as the building removed or of other buildings in the street. He had been much struck, too, by the manner in which old buildings were pulled down; instead of being knocked down, as in this country, without any regard as to the dust that was occasioned, each stone of the building was dropped to the ground by a pulley, and a hose was turned on to the interior of the building to prevent dust flying about everywhere.

Mr. HIPPOLYTE J. BLANC, R.S.A. (Edinburgh), said he feared, from observations made by members present, that architects themselves would be the most difficult body of men in the country to control. He looked in another direction for a cure of the evils drawn attention to by the President. The President had said that those evils arose partly from a want of knowledge, a want of interest, and a want of control. It was true that what we knew least about we had least interest in; and in his opinion the best cure for the evils referred to was to educate the public. Given the knowledge, and the consequent interest, the control would often not be necessary. All who had travelled on the Continent must have recognised the effect of control—in such a city as Paris, for instance. No one wished to see London, or any other city, with such monotonous frontages as those of the Boulevard des Italiens and the Rue de Rivoli. The beauty of architecture was often seen in its variety. What was wanted was the education of the architect and a true appreciation of the architect's works by the public. He recognised that some measure of control was required; but he would make that control not too hard and fast—control, in fact, by suggestion, by a competent body of architects and laymen combined. He had always felt that laymen read architecture in a totally different light from that in which architects did; but architects were indebted for suggestions from intelligent laymen. The Edinburgh Architectural Association had from the commencement been composed of architects and laymen, and to those laymen the architect members had been deeply indebted. By attending the meetings of the Association, and by travelling about the country with them, the lay members had become interested in what they had seen, and in that way had obtained an architectural education, and had become intelligent members in discussions upon architecture. He did not like the use of the word "control"; the committee should be a watch committee to make suggestions, and it should be composed of architects and laymen. He did not include painters, for, with all respect, he did not think a painter could judge from a geometric elevation what the ultimate effect would be in elevation, and he had always hesitated to submit his designs for public work to the verdict of a painter. With regard to control, that was very necessary in laying out new streets

and in designing bridges. Those latter works were frequently the work of engineers, whose training rarely fitted them to give the necessary architectural finish to their work. On the Continent they knew better how to do these things. The charm and the variety of the bridges over the Seine, and the artistic skill expressed in them, were very marked. Unless the work of the engineer was clothed with the artistic skill of the architect it was generally crude and uninteresting.

Mr. ERNEST DAY [F.] (Worcester) said he thought that control in design would be very beneficial to the community at large. He was very pleased that the London County Council had been going somewhat on the lines suggested by the President in the new street from Holborn to the Strand. He felt with the last speaker that the education of the public in architecture was necessary; and that might be, to some extent, achieved by art and technical schools, architectural and archaeological societies, and in branches of the Institute. He quite felt that in all public schemes and improvements it would be a distinct advantage to secure the support and co-operation of various corporations and local bodies with the Institute. The scheme which the President had foreshadowed would be looked upon, he feared, by the ordinary layman and many public bodies as an undoubted interference, and would require considerable care and judgment in any negotiations in order to attain success.

Mr. F. R. KEMPSON [F.] (Hereford) said he thought that a council of advice would be better than one to dictate.

Mr. JOSEPH SMITH [F.] (Sheffield) said that from the remarks made it was clear that no one was satisfied with the present state of things. While there was a good deal of control in matters of construction by local authorities (which in many cases was felt to be irksome), yet in this matter of æsthetic treatment of design architects were left very much to themselves, with results that were not satisfactory. He felt that there was an urgent need for a different order of things, and that the scheme suggested by the President might usefully be tried. To put the æsthetic control of design in the hands of local authorities as at present constituted would be a great mistake. Up in the North it had been made a condition that elevations should be submitted for approval, and some local authorities had approved monstrous designs.

Mr. ARTHUR CATES [F.] said he had heard the paper with very great interest, but he felt, however desirable the aim, it was somewhat Utopian in the present circumstances. Mr. Young had shown that in London and elsewhere a certain amount of control of design already existed; and however imperfectly it may be exercised, and then only on particular estates, the very good results which had followed showed how desirable

it was that such control should be general, and should in the public interests be more stringent. One of the points which had apparently existed in the mind of the President, and had caused him to wish for more efficient control, appeared to be the manner in which recent public buildings in London had been erected. There appeared to be exceeding good ground for that feeling. The President had proposed a Ministry of Fine Art which should have absolute power in controlling designs for public buildings. Had such a Ministry existed at the time of the great Public Offices competition in 1856 the miserable results which followed might have been avoided, and together with the absurdity of awarding premiums for elaborate designs for remodelling the district between Charing Cross and Westminster Bridge as an official quarter where the business of the State might be concentrated in buildings of appropriate character all arranged in stately order; and then having selected the most appropriate scheme, at once proceeding to render its consummation impossible by erecting in a piecemeal manner blocks of offices, unfortunate in design, insufficient in accommodation, and in general idea and in position absolutely antagonistic to the general scheme approved for the rearrangement of the district. The establishment of any such Ministry of Control would, however, then have met, and would now meet, with considerable opposition from two sources: one would be that which was generally known as Treasury control as regards public buildings, and the other would be what the Legislature was exceedingly fond of, viz. Parliamentary control. It was not likely that either "control" would be surrendered to any independent body; but such control should at the least be under intelligent guidance, and as free from mere political influences as the peculiarities of our constitution would permit. The control of the Treasury related to expense, and led to the cutting down of buildings to the imagined requirements of cost, reducing the accommodation to the minimum, omitting decoration and "useless" architectural features, and generally, without regard to the future, thinking only of the reduction of present expenditure, and was influenced by the cry: "Will Parliament vote the money?" not, "Is the building a good one?" If the history of the public offices in Downing Street could be written from the commencement it would be a monumental history of folly, waste, and extravagance. The same could be said of the Law Courts, and the same, though in stronger terms, with regard to the Admiralty buildings, which were the most striking and unfortunately permanent monument of the evil results of the control of public buildings by Parliamentary Committees. The whole principle which governed the control and erection of public buildings in this country might be characterised as the principle of wasteful economy and profligate

parsimony, which had resulted in the end in reckless extravagance and great waste of the nation's money. He agreed with the apology of Sir John Taylor for the Office of Works; for they were not responsible for the failures which had resulted, but being under Treasury and Parliamentary influence and control, and the post of First Commissioner of Works being a political office, the Department could only carry out as best they could what was decided by superior authority, without that continuity of idea and design essential for all great public works, which could only be attained by such a ministry as indicated, or in a lesser degree, if possible under government by party, by making the position of First Commissioner of Works a non-political office, and thus obtaining some continuity of authoritative influence free from political questions. The improved system of finance and general arrangements adopted with regard to the War Office in Whitehall and the new offices in Parliament Street was a hopeful sign of advance, and might be considered as an appreciation of the errors of the past and a desire to avoid the policy which had led to such disastrous results in other cases. As regards buildings on private lands and buildings on new sites in London, there was an important and, he thought, maleficent influence at work. The majority of buildings put up in London were not erected by those about to live in them, but by land speculators who got hold of the land with the intention of making as much money out of it as they could. They employed an architect to put up what they called "remunerative buildings," and they created an improved rent on it, and sold the improved rent, at a considerable gain to themselves, to corporations and public bodies who, in this country, by their articles of incorporation or charters, had been, unfortunately, restricted from building themselves, and so had to fall into the hands of these land speculators. It could not be supposed that the architects employed by those speculators were men who would take the same interest in the adornment of the Metropolis as those who might act for great corporations. And the limitations on the action of such corporations thus seriously affected the development and adornment of the Metropolis. Some feeble attempts at restraint of undesirable buildings had been made by legislation, but more power might well be placed in the hands of the central London authority. As to railway companies, it was much to be regretted that there was not some stringent condition which would compel them in suburban districts to carry out their works in a suitable manner. It was a great scandal that those who desired to produce a more satisfactory result should be met with the statement: "These plans conform to the requirements of the Board of Trade," such requirements relating only to strength of construction, gradients,

headway, and the like, without any regard to appearance or amenity. If the companies conformed to the Board of Trade requirements, a Parliamentary Committee would rarely intervene, and it was only in cases where great pressure could be brought to bear on the companies that anything like reasonable designs could be extorted from them. Thus all the great thoroughfares out of London, and many in London itself, were defaced by structures hideous in themselves, but yet legalised, because conforming to regulations appropriate enough for rural districts but quite insufficient to meet urban requirements. It was hardly possible to realise how largely the interests of the State were involved in the style and character of public and private buildings and works; how much the mind and habits of the people might be influenced by conditions of life surrounded by dignified and appropriate buildings, and what immense advantages would accrue to the State, the public, and the individual by efficient control being exercised over the design and material of all erections in our towns and cities.

Mr. EMERSON, in reply, said he was glad to have heard the various suggestions made, but he thought that both Sir John Taylor and Mr. Cates had misunderstood his meaning. He had not intended to reflect on the management of the Office of Works or on the new Government buildings, except to suggest the insufficiency of the sites, though perhaps, as to the Admiralty buildings, he rather had in his mind the aesthetic effect of the building. But there could be no doubt that the Law Courts were built on an insufficient site, and, added to that, the fault was aggravated by the insistence of the committee, who probably did not understand planning, and adopted a scheme with a central hall, which was practically useless, and therefore wasted space on an already insufficient site. A controlling body of competent men would have pointed out this defect in the plans in the first instance, though he did not suggest the control of public buildings so much. Of course there had been a certain amount of control in the designs for the new War Office and Government offices, and the Government had tried to get good designs, with carefully considered architecture, and he hoped that the result would be satisfactory. What he had specially referred to was the fact that any one could take a site in one of our public streets or places and build abominable architecture, which had no harmony, proportion, or beauty, and regardless of the adjoining buildings, which might be beautiful or good. He did not think his scheme would result in one-man architecture, and that was why he proposed a committee of men of common-sense and with artistic perception. He did not see why buildings should not be diversified in character and yet harmonious, but by his scheme he might avoid having a fairly nice design in stone spoilt

by juxtaposition with some wretched erection in brick. As had been suggested, the committee should be an ordinary one, but unless it had some power to insist in certain cases he did not see the use of it, for architects were generally rather inclined to insist themselves. But many buildings were put up without architects—or at all events their names were never heard—and it was in such cases that the committee could most usefully exercise control. As to educating the public, that took a long time, though no doubt it was the real means of effecting a change in the architecture of our streets and towns. The Institute was doing its best by means of its examinations to promote the education of the architect, and he hoped and believed that the influence of many architects on the public was considerable. But until the public were educated were we to go on as we had been, letting our streets be an eyesore to the educated passer-by?

Could not some steps be taken to prevent the production of ugliness in towns? His ideas had been put forward as suggestions, and he had in his mind a building only just erected in one of our principal West End streets which was a disgrace to the neighbourhood. That it was possible to put up such a building adjacent to some rather fine buildings was monstrous. As to Mr. Day's remark about the London County Council, the action of that body in regard to the designs for the new street from Holborn to the Strand was praiseworthy, inasmuch as they had tried to get a grand scheme; but what was the use of a grand scheme, and what was the use of obtaining designs from architects, if individuals might eventually be allowed to put up what they liked, regardless of the scheme? Practically, the London County Council would not guarantee to use the designs.

THE COLLABORATION OF THE ARCHITECT, THE PAINTER, AND THE SCULPTOR.

By ED. W. MOUNTFORD [*F.*], SIR WILLIAM RICHMOND, K.C.B., R.A. [*H.A.*],
and E. ROSCOE MULLINS.

I. FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE ARCHITECT. By ED. W. MOUNTFORD.

FOR some considerable number of years it has been the custom at meetings of the Royal Institute of British Architects, when we are honoured by the presence of eminent representatives of the allied arts, willing to give us their valuable opinions upon matters of mutual interest, for an architect to produce a kind of brief preface or introductory note. This explanation is undoubtedly necessary to account for my having ventured to accept the invitation of the Congress Committee to address you on a subject upon which I have no kind of claim to be considered an authority.

The collaboration of the architect, the painter, and the sculptor is not only a matter of great importance, but one which is daily becoming more and more deserving of our consideration. There is reason to believe that the public—or, at least, the more educated part of it—is awakening to the fact that good art is both desirable and attainable in our buildings, and that even though this may increase their cost the money is well invested.

The art of architecture is not to be considered as dependent for its perfection upon the assistance of sculpture and painting, as some would have us believe. It is well known that many of our most admired ancient buildings are destitute of either; and the work of our greatest living architect is conspicuously free from any such assistance. Colour of the most beautiful kind may be obtained from the materials used in our work, and it is quite possible to invest buildings with some interest and richness of effect without calling upon the sister arts.

But we shall probably be perfectly agreed upon the great desirability of inviting the aid of our brethren of the brush and the chisel to beautify and embellish our buildings whenever it is possible to do so—which means, in the first place, when it may please our clients to provide the means. This is still one great difficulty, because we must have really good sculpture and fine painting, and, like most other good things, these are expensive. It is the unhappy fate of most architects to have their designs and intentions very much cramped or cut down by the want of the necessary money to realise them; and we have to be content to keep our buildings absolutely plain because bad pictures or bad carving defile a building, and must be shunned like other sins.

Supposing, however, that we have been entrusted with the erection of a building for which there are ample funds, so that we may with a good conscience invite an eminent sculptor and an eminent painter to help in making it as beautiful as we know how: then we begin to understand that there is some enjoyment in life after all, and proceed to our work with even more than the usual enthusiasm. At the earliest possible moment—that is to say, so soon as the first rough sketches are completed—we shall desire to consult our chosen fellow-workers; and from that time until our joint creation stands accomplished, the more frequent our intercourse the better for our building.

It must not be forgotten that the building is the thing, and the architecture is not to

become a mere background for the painting or sculpture. They are means to be employed for giving additional interest and beauty to the building, explaining its purposes, its uses, and its history or the history of its builders, becoming part of the architecture itself, and not to be thought of otherwise.

The work of the sculptor and painter in relation to a building bears some resemblance to the illustrations of a great book, of which the architect is the author; and just as the illustrator of a book must make himself acquainted with its contents and the intentions of its author, so should they enter into the scheme of the architect and help to make his meaning clear. As some books require no illustrations, while in others they are of great importance, some buildings are complete without the painting and sculpture which in others strongly appeal to people who are quite unable to appreciate the architecture, and take no interest in it.

The resemblance is certainly by no means perfect. An architect in consultation with the sculptor and painter will provide in his buildings fitting opportunities for their work, spaces for frescoes or sculpture, or niches for statues, and will, if necessary, arrange or modify his detail to meet their views. Harmony of purpose and oneness of interest between all three artists are absolutely essential, or the work must suffer. It seems to me possible that the architect and sculptor may have more in common than the architect and the painter, working, as they both do, in the round; for though colour also enters largely into the work of an architect, it is not, usually, the colour of the painter. In any case there must be harmony of style and purpose, and not less essential are breadth and simplicity. These latter qualities have been so much spoken of, written about, and discussed lately, that one feels it necessary to apologise for again mentioning them. But important as they are in all design, they are even more so in connection with this subject, so they must come in again. How many buildings has one seen spoiled by overmuch carving, often poor stuff that has no meaning, except to cover the poverty of the architecture; but even of good work it is possible to have too much upon a building. It is not difficult to spoil an interior by too much colour decoration, be it painting or mosaic, and there are some modern examples which go far to justify the present taste for whitewash.

Without complete sympathy with the architect, a painter, no matter how great his skill or good his intentions, may do much to spoil a work of architecture, either by concealing features the architect may wish emphasised, painting out the construction as it were, or emphasising others which the architect would prefer to have left in modest retirement. The appearance of mouldings may be quite altered by their treatment in colour; or spaces, which were necessarily left plain for the desired architectural effect, may be painted with a design, possibly very good in itself, but quite undoing the intention of the architect.

It is not for me to suggest here anything as to the manner or methods of the painter. Every architect will have his own views as to the decoration in colour of his building, and would fully explain them to the painter entrusted with the work. Very possibly the architect's views may be quite mistaken, and the painter, if able to convince him of this, is rendering him a very good service. May I say that to me the pictorial treatment of a flat ceiling seems a great waste of time and skill? It is not usual in good society to lie upon the floor, and yet this is the one position in which a ceiling so painted can be properly seen. Even then the positions of any figures in the painting are impossible and absurd, unless the painter has represented them flying in mid air, with the soles of their feet and other portions of the body not usually seen made unduly conspicuous—which treatment, however skilful, is scarcely pleasing. Such ceilings are for the sculptor, if the architect desires some assistance to invest them with artistic merit.

It is hardly necessary to maintain that a painter, by bringing atmosphere into his mural work, treating his subject in a thoroughly realistic manner, simply destroys the architecture. Happily most English painters now understand decorative work too well to do such a thing, except in specially prepared panels. A considerable amount of conventionality must be employed.

With the sculptor the architect has to discuss, not only the subjects of his work, but the materials, the scale, the amount of relief, and the jointing of the stone. The small scale models which the sculptor will prepare may be most usefully extended to embrace as much of the surrounding architecture as possible, and the architecture will probably greatly benefit if this course be followed.

Sculpture I regard as being much more a necessity for important buildings than colour decoration, which is rather a luxury seldom to be attained. Moreover, being much less appreciated by the general public than painting, the cost is less. Probably of every hundred people who are "fond of pictures," less than twenty take any interest in sculpture, and certainly not more than five care anything about architecture. And the Royal Academy, as well as Her Majesty's Ministers, exactly reflects public opinion in this respect, which accounts for many things.

There is one small point with respect to the use of sculpture which is worth a little consideration. It is not unusual for a statue, large or small, to be placed upon the summit of a tower or the apex of a lofty gable, but the result is often not happy. A plain moulded terminal would generally look better and cost a great deal less, while the money so saved could be used with much better effect upon some less elevated part of the building. My objection does not apply so much to figures placed along the parapet of a building of moderate height, which can be seen only from the front, although even here a background of masonry is better than one of sky. But isolated figures at a considerable height from the ground nearly always look unsatisfactory from at least one point of view.

As regards the use of both sculpture and coloured decoration, I have a strong suspicion that many of the old buildings of Italy and elsewhere that we now so justly admire must have aroused quite different emotions in us had we seen them when fresh from the mason's hand.

In conclusion, may I be allowed to express my appreciation—which is shared, I am sure, by all architects—of the manner in which Sir William Richmond referred to the art of architecture in his recent speech at Bath? It would be well for all kinds of art if his opinions were more generally held, and one can but wish that his fellow Academicians should read and endeavour to understand all that he said.

II. FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE PAINTER.

By Sir W. B. RICHMOND, K.C.B., R.A. [H.A.].

A PAPER written to be read in ten minutes should, I think, be both terse and suggestive; it certainly cannot pretend to be exhaustive. Its object should be the promotion of intelligent, even warm, discussion. If this Paper is abrupt in its transitions as well as in statement of my views the foregoing reasons must be my excuse for such defects. We all desire closer union than now exists between the three great arts, as well as a more intimate conjunction with them of the lesser arts and crafts.

It is the wish of all of us that the spirit of the true artist should preside over all our labours, great or small—a spirit which induces spontaneity of design, and which prompts

sincere endeavour to carry it out with clearness, which shall be the expression of ourselves, and therefore with style. Style is what is wanted, and is so often absent, the impression of the mind and hand of the artist. Of "styles" most of us weary; their use, more often than not, implies absence of invention, and is but an attempt to revitalise corpses. Rather than follow them, ought we not to be bound by the requirements of our age?

The collaboration of the architect, sculptor, and painter ought not to be difficult. To be successful the architect should not interfere with the sculptor or painter, *qua* their designs; this he will not need to do if his style is his own, for if they are true artists, all of them, they will give and take according to the requirements of their arts as well as of each other's art. They will each respect the other's province, that of the architect as the designer, or builder (as Wren is named upon his tomb) of the structure; of the sculptor as the designer and carver of effigies, ornament and its attendant parts; of the painter, the designer, and executant of the pictures, their borders, &c., and their colour scheme.

But both sculptor and painter must give way to the architect upon matters of scale, of proportion of part to part, so that their work shall be harmonious in scale with his; of quantity, of projection, whether in the round or relief, of the fairness or depth as to tone, of the painter's scheme. So will they labour in harmony.

While architects insist upon "styles" they will get no first-rate sculptors or painters to aid them or to work with them. For the adornment of "styles" they have to continue to go to "firms" where they can be provided with as many shams as they require, all quite lifeless and hopelessly out of touch with the movement of this, or for the matter of that with any period, because they do not reflect it.

As long as "styles" are abjectly adhered to, art must remain dead! No artists, as far as we know, imitated the work of their predecessors; they wrought in the vernacular of their environment. In recent times Viollet-le-Duc, admirable antiquarian and voluminous writer, has given an example of the inevitable failure which must attend upon "styles" of decoration in many of the churches of France. Witness his cartoons in the Louvre and his wall paintings in Notre-Dame, about which nothing can be said but that they are wholly uninteresting.

Santa Maria Novella, in Florence, is a nest of anachronism according to the modern standard. The wall paintings there by Cimabue, Gaddi, Giotto, and Ghirlandajo, and by later painters also, are side by side. Ghirlandajo did not paint in the style of Giotto; he painted as his period dictated. The west circular window contains glass of the early fourteenth century; the west window is late fifteenth in the style of the period. Side by side are monuments which date from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries in the style of the period. So the Church, as it were, breathes history from its walls; its monuments and paintings are sincere demonstrations of their authors' originality and spontaneity. This is one instance out of hundreds which might be brought forward that proves the universal law that no art is really valuable which does not emanate from the spirit of the period which gave birth to its author. It is because of its sincerity of purpose that art interests us. Fancy Ghirlandajo decorating the portion of the church assigned to him after the manner of Giotto, or Giotto in that of Cimabue, because Cimabue painted on the walls of the church at the time of its erection; they would not, could not have been such slaves to pedantry.

As soon as architects design original buildings—which, by the way, here and there they do: irrespective of severe canons of proportion and orders, but structurally consequent and individual—they will find plenty of sculptors and painters to work with them; but as long as they design in styles no original men will be slaves to them: they must continue to get the adornments for their structures from "the trade." Is not it a mistake to specialise early? The young painters—indeed, the old ones also—know

nothing or little about architecture; nor is the young sculptor made aware of the position that his work ought to hold in relation to spaces. Neither does the architect get a chance of working in conjunction with sculptors and painters, who should be his colleagues in his earliest days of training; they are brought up separately, and they remain separate; consequently neither their interests nor sympathies are current.

Finally, of course, the architect is the responsible person; therefore he should be a thoroughly equipped artist. Would it not be possible to avoid too early specialising? How few architects there are that know anything about colour! How few painters are even indirectly interested in architecture; and how few sculptors learn to be an attendant upon architecture! And what a loss it is to each that he is so ignorant of his sister arts!

The great men of past times were rarely specialists. Every one knows that Giotto was painter, sculptor, and architect. So was Raphael, so was Brunelleschi, so were Michael Angelo and Leonardo. Pheidias was the son of a painter, and was educated in that craft; Ictinus was a sculptor as well as an architect. I suspect they worked harmoniously; and no doubt whoever designed the colour scheme of the Parthenon did so in conjunction with his colleagues.

The well-equipped designer is able to cover a large field of action. If he can design in one material, why not in another? None of the techniques are so enormously difficult, either of building, carving, or painting, that they cannot be acquired by patience, *given the artistic temperament*. It is the artistic use of techniques acquired by experience which succeeds, or the reverse, in exact relation to the quantity of intelligence and judgment that have been put into it.

Our age is one of "harking back"—archæological more than creative. Certainly this applies to architecture. But in the arts of painting and sculpture such a term applies with far less accuracy. The best work now being done in them reflects the spirit of our time. Do the majority of our buildings do that? Does the Tower Bridge reflect our time, for example? When architects do so the sculptors and painters will almost automatically come into touch with them, and the crafts also with them.

To reiterate: no original designer, painter, or sculptor would execute in the thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, or sixteenth century style to satisfy the pedantry of an architect, though if he had made an *excursus* into any of those styles he might be able to do so; but if he did, his work *qua* art and style would be quite valueless. The sculptor *makes* statues, the painter *makes* pictures; they do not design them only. Should not the architect *make* buildings? And, just as the painter and sculptor learn anatomy, should not the young architect be apprenticed to a builder, that he may learn the anatomy of his art and become in the highest sense a builder?

I confess to thinking that art education cannot be commenced too early or be too broad and inclusive. Specialism would follow according to the bent of the student's capacity.

Should not a young architect practise decorative painting and sculpture up to a certain point? It could do him nothing but good. And the same principle should, I think, apply to the education of sculptors and painters; early instruction concerning plan and structure could do them nothing but good.

Advanced students should, I think, be encouraged to collaborate. Given a model designed in conclave, made by the architect, to be sculptured by the sculptor and decorated by the painter, how interesting such efforts would become! What a stimulus they would give to the three arts! Each student having thus become conversant with the arts of his colleagues would be in a position to criticise as well as to appreciate them.

The three arts would thus grow up as it were together; they would not be strangers to one another. The great mother of the arts, Architecture, would take to her children again, who have separated from her, as she has from them, to their and to her privation.

The purist may imagine that Greek temples, early and late Gothic churches, or even early Renaissance, were bald and colourless; but they were not: we know, on the contrary, that they were highly coloured and decorated, probably with what we, with love of faint anæmic tints, would call crude colours. And modern buildings may be decorated with strong colours; why not? Crude colour soon tones down if the shades are harmonious.

Purity does not reside only in form; form is not its only exponent. Colour can be rich, splendid, strong, and yet be chaste. Chastity is not weak and anæmic, it is the sign of vigour and strength. Sculpture may be coloured even vehemently; painted woodwork, marbles, gold and other metals can be introduced lavishly, without one jot of purity being injured. But such a revival cannot come all of a sudden; we have to become used to experiments: these may be uncommon, unconventional, and as such they must take time to become established in and recognised by the public mind.

We have the material, minds and matter, for the most rich and splendid work, but upon account of the divorce of the three great arts and of the crafts from them more or less that material is only serviceable within a narrow range and under unduly restricted conditions. Once get young students, architects, sculptors, and painters, into touch with one another's art, and a really vital school will spring up with astonishing quickness. Architects will then take their proper position as artists and sculptors and painters with them in conjunction. Pedantry and its near relative dullness will cease to exist; painting will no longer be considered as "The Art," and the other two as minors. To the attainment of this end we should, I think, struggle—an end which means union, wherein there is strength—share in the struggle and help, not hinder, each other's efforts. It is not precedence that any of us desire, but concord, mutual progress, and unity. We are individually striving to render England more beautiful; let us try to do so collectively; let us strike out for freedom, not license, but freedom based upon the only sound foundation, sincerity, combined with knowledge of the various branches of what after all is but one art.

III. FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE SCULPTOR. By E. ROSCOE MULLINS.

IT may well be that a sculptor will approach the subject of the collaboration of architect, painter, and sculptor from rather a more stringent point of view than would a painter; for whilst a painter can and does develop his art alone, independently of the other arts, requiring only house-room, his art not suffering if so separated, it is otherwise with sculpture. A sculptor, I maintain, is only truly working out his art in its highest conception when he is working in unison with architecture, and is controlled and inspired by its conditions and limitations; and in so far as the willing hand of architecture is not held out to sculpture, the art suffers. The natural and rightful place for sculpture is in connection with or upon buildings, which it should ennoble and beautify by its presence; the treatment of sculpture should depend upon the particular lighting that the chosen position and the surroundings would give it, and much of its shape, arrangement, and effect must be due to the space allotted for its filling.

This is not, I know, the popular view of the art, but that it is the true one a glance at the past great periods would prove. I can only, in the short time allowed me, give this glance, but detailed inquiry would bear out my statement. There is hardly a work of sculpture in the British Museum that is not decorative in the true sense—that is, work that was applied to buildings, executed for buildings, of which the beauties can now only rightly be appreciated by recalling the buildings the work was designed to decorate. In the days of the Renaissance it

was equally so: Michael Angelo, Donatello, Luca della Robbia, Ghiberti, all collaborated with architects, and their best work was done for architecture. In the Gothic days, too, this truth is equally apparent, which a visit to the chapels and tombs at Westminster abundantly proves.

It is only in these days that the direct union has been lost, and the art has been conceived as standing alone—*freistehende*, as the Germans say—and, like painting, thought to be free and independent. Nothing has fostered this false view so much as the prevailing custom of exhibitions, and I must also add museums, for in both we see sculpture isolated, in no connection with the place it is designed to fill. In exhibitions we accustom ourselves to a standard of isolation, forgetful of the main purpose of the work: that is, its surroundings and the causes of its shape and treatment. This aspect is lost in the æsthetic admiration of the work alone. Decoration in former days did not mean a mere filling up of space by some stone carver or so-called monumental sculptor, but rather the representation by the nation's most gifted sculptors of the stories and legends believed in by the people, and executed in such a manner as to enhance the beauty of their national buildings, and make complete and explain what would otherwise be bare and unintelligible. This was decoration in the past. How differently in our own day is decoration understood, when it has too often come to mean merely endless repetitions of meaningless ornament, as suitable to a tavern as to a church!

To show the evils of backsliding, we may note the tendency of sculpture, when separated from architecture, in the popular form it takes at exhibitions, to develop into a species of bric-à-brac and *objets de vertu*—statuettes rather than statues, coloured combinations of assortments of stones and jewels, surface treatments of realistic skin-folds, and often ugly renderings of nature—anything, in fact, but work possessing the properties of true sculpture, which should depend upon breadth and knowledge of light and shade, and simple massing of form. In our Royal Academy the influence of the painter is felt on sculpture instead of that of the architect, and the result is scarcely satisfactory. It is natural that truthfully-modelled surfaces, literal renderings of nature, and combinations of colour would have more weight with a painter than with a sculptor; but in sculpture such tendencies conduce to realism, and the closer the imitation the less is the art displayed. Too often the work, when done, is only suitable to become part of a rich man's collection of isolated treasures, that only the few therefore can possess, rather than fitted to belong to the nation as a whole, as it could do if it were executed for public buildings.

There is one other evil I should like to mention, to which the sculptor is prone if he is detached from architectural control, and that is making the search after beauty as his one aim. To me it always appears that no theory that has been advanced has done so much to destroy individuality and original talent as this loadstone of beauty. An artist, who is seeking for beauty alone, is as a man seeking for happiness—a desirable end to attain, but never attained by directly planning or searching for it. And it is the same with the attainment of beauty in sculpture; the end is only reached by having some more definite object in view, while the vague search for beauty only leads to imitation and trite conventionality. Let the immediate purpose of the work, however, be simply the desire to tell a story in the best possible way, and to adapt it to the place that the work is to fill, then the element of beauty will still possibly be there, without striving especially for it, and at any rate the work will be stamped with individuality.

Perhaps the time when least attention was paid to architectural decoration was at the beginning of this reign, when sculpture was represented in this country by Gibson; and his work shows the effete result of a one-sided striving for beauty, that ended in the neglect of nature and the adoption of a pseudo-classic treatment, uninteresting and unmeaning to us Englishmen of this century.

Since that time we have advanced in the right direction, and some of our best sculptors' work can be seen on buildings, forming part of a whole scheme, and helping the purpose of the buildings for which they were intended. But though we have moved in the right direction, there are yet misconceptions to remove before sculpture can be fully applied in its true field as the co-mate of architecture. This is brought home to us when we note the one form of sculpture that we may say is fairly tolerated in England—that is, portrait sculpture. Supposing we accept this form as characteristic of the nation—and I fear we have not yet risen to things higher—can we say, except in a few instances, that we have succeeded in portraying the individual man? I think not. The very size in which we depict him—I refer to outdoor statues—is sufficient to prevent the sculptor from giving an individual rendering of his subject. He is content if he succeeds in getting a portrait of the face, while to the figure he gives general classic proportions, so that we have individual heads on our statues that would fit equally well on any other statues' bodies and legs.

Now, if these portrait statues had been designed to fill niches or stand in courtyards, or to be placed in front of buildings, of which they would then form part, the size of the statue could be diminished, and attention given to the portrait of the man as he is, or was, not merely in face, but in figure. I maintain that no portrait statue should look more than life-size; it ought, that is, not to strike the observer as abnormal; the extra size that is given should be due only to the necessity of the surroundings and the height at which the statue is placed. I think the only form of sculpture that will stand the test of isolation is work with strong action, as some equestrian statues, and ideal work that is not subject to the restrictions of modern dress; but even these are improved by a background at least of trees.

This association with architecture would open other fields where the sculptor's art could assert itself, and where the nation's desire to perpetuate the memory of her great sons could be encouraged. For instance, a Hall of Heroes, a Walhalla, would be far more interesting and instructive, where the deeds of the great could be recorded, and where the whole building could be devoted to that end, than is the prevailing custom of thrusting statues, as we do now, into Westminster Abbey and other noble buildings not designed for them; where they are void of meaning, and destroy instead of adding to the beauty of these buildings. In a modest way, too, I think there is room in our cemeteries and churchyards for a happier union of the two arts. Most of the sculpture we see there, besides being commonplace in design, is often vulgarly obtrusive; yet I think a cemetery should be a home for good sculpture, and it could be made so if the sheltering hand of architecture were there too, to give restraint—a necessary element and especially appropriate in a place hallowed by the association with our dead.

In so short a paper it would be out of place to enter into matters of detail, and I think, even with unlimited time at my disposal, I should hesitate before laying down any rules or restrictions as to methods of work or treatment of subjects. One might with equal right prescribe the style in which an architect should build. The only two conditions I consider essential are that the sculpture, whatever its character and wherever placed, should be seen in its entirety, and the form the work takes should be the suitable one for the position; not as in the case of the frieze that runs round the Athenæum Club in Pall Mall, and again over the gateway at Hyde Park Corner, which are copies of the well-known Panathenaic frieze of the Parthenon, but which are placed under quite different conditions of light and position than those that guided the architect and sculptor of the Greeks in their choice of the style of relief.

In decoration the sculptor should assert his own individuality, and not be bound by effete laws of design; there is no other golden rule to follow, to ensure interest and vivacity, and interest and vivacity are two of the three elements necessary to all true decoration. The remaining element is the sense of restraint alluded to before; for although the spectator should be conscious of the expression of movement, yet he craves at the same time for repose,

and this is added by the restraining force of architectural surroundings. This restraint, instead of hampering the sculptor, really brings out the strength of his art, and shows its manifold capabilities of adaptation to required ends.

To sum up, I have intentionally dwelt upon the advantages accruing to sculpture rather than to architecture in this desired union of the two arts, and have left the gain that would belong to architecture to inference only. This I regret the less, as that side of the question has been fully entered into in the wider treatment accorded by the reader of the previous paper. The points I would insist upon are these: that it is against the best traditions of the past to divorce the arts of architecture and sculpture; that this divorce leads to a low estimate of sculptural decoration, as well as to a want of direction and meaning in the sculptor's work; that gallery exhibitions of isolated works belittle the art of sculpture; that portrait sculpture is shorn of its character and truth, which can only be truly given when incorporated in a wide scheme of decoration. For these reasons, therefore, I maintain that a healthy demand for sculpture and a capable and satisfactory development of the art can only be attained by returning once more to the traditions of the past and effecting a closer union of the kindred arts—architecture and sculpture.

DISCUSSION.

Mr. WM. EMERSON, *President R.I.B.A.*, in the Chair.

Mr. SELWYN IMAGE, Master of the Art Workers' Guild, remarked that they had heard three short, but extremely suggestive, papers by three eminent artists on a subject of the highest importance. The compliment had been paid him of asking him to open the discussion. He appreciated the compliment very keenly, and he frankly confessed that this Congress seemed to him to be of very great importance. The real importance of the Congress, if he might say so, seemed to lie in the ability of the readers of the Papers and the speakers who followed to realise the great fact that they now had the representative body in England of the great mother art calling into its councils artists of all kinds to assist it with their advice. And the Royal Institute in this Congress was insisting in the strongest possible manner on the immensely important principle which had been so often forgotten, and for which some of them had for many years fought so strenuously—namely, the great principle of the unity of the arts. The Royal Institute, in taking this action, had done something to bring about the union of the arts. Now the union of artists, and the great principle of the unity of the arts, did not mean in the least that they were to sink their differences and to become of one mind. Such an event, even if it could be arrived at, would be most undesirable; but it was a great thing indeed to meet men in the flesh, to see people whose work they knew, see what they were like and to talk with them. It was astounding how many prejudices and misunderstandings were got over in that way, and how much their own views underwent change when they met people in the flesh and face to face. In connexion with this he always thought of the old story of Charles Lamb. Somebody had

been running down a certain gentleman whom he would call Mr. Brown. Charles Lamb got into a furious temper, exclaiming, "I hate Mr. Brown!" The gentleman replied, "You cannot possibly hate Mr. Brown—you do not know him." "Know him!" exclaimed Lamb; "how could I hate him if I knew him?" That was in his (the speaker's) view an admirable way to put it. He thought artists would not—he would not say hate one another, but misunderstand one another in the way they did if they only met together. Hence it was a great achievement that the Institute had brought them together. It was impossible that there should not be some division amongst them, and it was impossible that there should be one prevailing style; but it was possible for them to get rid of all misunderstanding, and to cultivate catholicity of taste and temper. In reference to this there was an admirable saying of Pope's, who, writing of a certain nobleman commending him as an authority on matters artistic and literary, remarked that he had so bad a taste as to like all things which were good.

Mr. HEYWOOD SUMNER said that he agreed with Mr. Image that the three Papers were very suggestive and very helpful in that they breathed the spirit of unity and concord. They seemed to combine in creating a visionary design of the arts of peace, with the architect in the centre holding out both arms; and they saw on one side the painter and on the other the sculptor rushing up to be embraced, while over them hovered Mr. Image as the angel dropping flowers of speech! For himself he (Mr. Sumner) appreciated extremely the hearty welcome that had been accorded to the young arts by the mother art. Beginning with Mr. Mountford, he was constrained however to

remark that he had heard many architectural friends speak upon the subject of the unity of the arts and about working together, but they scarcely if ever finished off except by saying: "Of course, the architect is quite independent, and can, if necessary, stand alone." Mr. Mountford said this in a most kindly way, but he did say it, and he took up the gauntlet. It was perfectly true that the architect could stand independent of the painter or sculptor, just as Mother Earth could stand independent of growth and life of any sort. Sometimes it seemed to him that if the architect had created the world he would have stopped in the middle of the third day, with the excuse that he did not want the sun—that would bring on too much colour; nor fish, nor birds, which we could do quite well without; and man and woman, because they would bring about frightful confusion. Seriously speaking, was not this position of the architect quite unfair? It seemed to him that if they looked at the nobler manifestations of architecture in the past they would see it was as a real mother that she extended her arms to the other arts. Mr. Mountford, on the other hand, would call in the painter and sculptor, but he would keep them in their place. Mr. Mountford seemed, indeed, a little afraid of colour; but Sir William Richmond literally revelled in it, and Mr. Mullins did not, with Mr. Mountford's flourish, say that the sculptor should be independent; on the contrary, he desired him to be dependent. In that he (the speaker) cordially agreed with him, likewise with his remarks about the exhibition and the Museum. With all their admiration for the great work that had been done by the Museum they must always remember that what work they saw in it was applied work—they were works the flotsam and jetsam of centuries, and they had found at last a home in a rather solemn sort of cemetery, the Museum. He thought that the present attitude towards art and works of art had to a certain extent been fostered by museums. That was the very danger. He, however, did not think he could follow Mr. Mullins when he spoke about the statues in Westminster Abbey. They represented the century in which they were erected, and the Abbey would not be the living building it is without them. As to the cemetery being a good home for sculptors, it certainly was now a good home for bad sculpture. He confessed that in the papers there was plenty of sympathy, but there was no direct "Open, sesame!" for working together in collaboration.

Mr. BERESFORD PITE [F.] observed that the line taken by Sir Wm. Richmond in regard to the distinction between styles and style was one of very great importance to architects, and one Mr. Street had given expression to in some Royal Academy lectures which he (Mr. Pite) had had the pleasure of hearing. He could not give Mr.

Street's definition between styles and style in his exact words, but he could give them the substance. Mr. Street held that style was an expression of character—the expression of the artist's feeling, rather than a copying of certain forms of architecture. That coming from a man like Street, who was regarded as being bound hand and foot to what he (the speaker) would call the corpse of Gothic, was very significant. The difficulty they encountered was that they were living at the close of a period of Renaissance, for, since the Renaissance put the world upside down, and the arts destroyed themselves, and students began to study from foreign foundations and drink from ancient waters, they had lived in much of a Renaissance, and they could not work themselves free from it. If they stripped an architect of his style—his architectural style—what was left? He was left to his own resources, to his own character. He had, say, been struggling with that for the past five years, and had now a style which he could only designate of the magpie-and-stump order. He had rubbed out everything, leaving only the bare walls and windows, which was nice so far as it went, but it did not go far enough. Let that architect strip himself of architectural styles and undertake a monumental work—say a national memorial work in Hyde Park. How would the magpie help him? He would be bound to go to the Renaissance, although he had the whole world of beauty open to him. He was bound to come to the conclusion that the cultivation of architectural character would have to be tried before they attempted the cultivation of architectural style from character.

Mr. WM. WOODWARD [A.] remarked that the subject was somewhat academic and theoretical, and he had hoped that the discussion would have taken the form of suggesting the manner in which the wishes of the readers of the Papers could have been accomplished. His first thought on hearing such Papers was to look around and see if there were any examples in which the unity of architects, painters, and sculptors had been successful. There was one building, namely, the University of London in Burlington Gardens, which was a very successful example of this union; but in the majority of cases many difficulties arose, the painter wanting projections, which the architect could not spare, taken away for the purpose of giving effect to his decoration, and the sculptor desiring other alterations for the benefit of his work. For the purposes of such a union they needed entire sympathy, and when that had been secured then they would be able to have that unity of the arts which all in that room and the public generally desired.

Mr. ASTON WEBB, A.R.A., F.S.A. [F.], said that unfortunately architects were looked upon as not altogether sympathetic in the movement for the unity of the arts. He thought it could not be

denied that they were most anxious for it. The difficulty to be solved was how to practically apply this principle. All art and imaginative work must be created, and it seemed only right and essential that the first creation of the building should rest with the architect. If after that they could collaborate with the artist and sculptor so much the better. There had been a house recently built in the erection of which a sort of co-operative system had been applied, a system in which an architect associated with himself a number of artists and craftsmen. That had worked very successfully, and so far as he had heard there had been no falling out amongst those engaged on the work. That certainly was an encouraging example. Another instance was the Albert Hall. Captain Fowke originated the general conception of the building, but, dying before it could be carried out, General Scott took command, and he associated with himself a large number of artists and craftsmen who carried out the work. General Scott read a Paper before the Institute at the time, describing how the work was done. He laid down the general lines of the oval plan, and then called into consultation the painters to design the great frieze, and architects and craftsmen who designed, and carried out the design; and here again he thought the result a success. Architects were not altogether to blame for the separation that had taken place between the arts; the work of the painter had become attractive almost to the exclusion of the decorative arts. It was Ruskin who said somewhere that it did not matter if a man spent three months in painting the petal of a flower, or covered a palace front with colour in a single day, so long as he had his whole heart in what he was doing. But they must see how they could employ the art of the painter with some hope of permanence, for no art without permanence was likely to call forth the best efforts of the artist. With reference to style, Mr. Pite had said what was true in declaring that a man could show his individuality in a style that had already been worked upon. To ask an architect to design a house in the Elizabethan style or in that of the thirteenth or fourteenth century was an insult, and one could easily sympathise with sculptors and painters who declined to be dragged into such vagaries as this.

Mr. H. G. IBBERSON [A.] said that an architect's chief difficulty was not in dealing with the painter or the sculptor, but with the public, which was the master of all three. The public, like Nature, abhorred a vacuum; it hated plain surfaces, and liked its decoration spread thin and cheap over the whole building. Why should it spend £100 in enriching a doorway with sculpture when the same amount would make the whole elevation beautiful with masons' carving, and give so much greater evidence of the wealth of the proprietor!

Mr. GEOFFREY LUCAS [A.] said it seemed to

him that Sir William Richmond had been somewhat hard on architects, for it was not they alone who should be accused of incapacity to produce fresh developments; but painters and sculptors, to judge by the annual exhibitions, might very well be included in that statement. To-day architects were probably more dictated to as to what they should do than workers in any other branch of art; and painters and sculptors were more voluntarily antiquarian in their sources of inspiration than architects. How very rarely was any serious effort made by painters to illustrate modern life, or to express great ideas and sentiments by present-day surroundings. Sculptors had made more effort towards these attainments, and in some cases successfully; but they were often ignorant of architectural matters. It was a unique experience to come across a successful pedestal to a statue, or architectural surroundings to a work when left in the sculptor's hands. Sculptors were inclined to put art before use when they undertook architectural subjects, and in illustration he would mention a font exhibited in that year's Royal Academy. The font and cover were wonderful pieces of work, very nebulous, which was the fashionable thing in art of all sorts to-day; but as exhibited they appeared quite unpractical in use, and directly contrary to the requirements of the rubrics. A great deal was said nowadays about a man's individuality showing in his work; but it was exceedingly questionable to him how much this should be expressed. If they took some of the great buildings of the past, even in the Renaissance period, they found the ruling principle was the revelation of the spirit of the age in which they were put up. There was not so much in man's individuality as some thought. Outside influences and environment had great effect on art work. St. Peter's did not owe its greatness to the employment upon it of particular architects so much as to the fact that the Popes required a big thing, and the architects had to supply it. So in the collaboration of architect, painter, and sculptor it was evident that if each indulged his own preferences the work would not hang together as an harmonious whole; but if each strove in his degree in every way to suit his work to its environment, and to grasp and interpret the spirit of the work from the same standpoint, there was every chance of a great and glorious building being the result with the talent that was obtainable to-day.

Mr. W. H. SETH-SMITH [F.] said he should like the Conference to know what was being done by the Architectural Association in London. He was very pleased to hear what Sir William Richmond had said about a broad training in art, and he could state that that was the kind of training which the Architectural Association were giving at the present time. Any suggestions which Sir William Richmond and other artists, painters,

and sculptors could give would be most welcome. They were giving courses in painting—water-colour work particularly—and also in modelling, by the very best men they could find, and they considered that allowed a broad basis for architectural training.

Mr. A. N. PATERSON, M.A. [A.] (Glasgow), said that to bring the matter of money into such a subject was to lower it from the high altitude it had gained; but, after all, as they all knew, money had a serious effect upon the limits of the work they had to do and the clients for whom they had to work. He found this difficulty with the painter, that that artist did not sufficiently recognise the difference between painting a picture on the chance of selling it for so many hundred or thousand guineas and a definite commission for the filling up of a space in a building. Painters had become so accustomed to selling squares of painted canvas that they were not prepared to consider the possibility of doing decorative work in collaboration with the architect for such a sum as his client was prepared to pay when the price per square foot was smaller than that fetched by the framed picture in an exhibition, forgetful of the fact that the one was financially a certainty, the other, in many cases, but a chance. The result was that in all but the most exceptional instances, in what might be called monumental work, the architect was forced to turn to the house-painter, who in general could be little relied upon outside of stencil work, with all its limitations. Gold frames and exhibitions had, in fact, placed a fictitious value on the art of painting, and the collaboration under consideration was in too many cases rendered impossible in consequence.

Mr. E. W. MOUNTFORD [F.] said his reply needed only to be very brief. The styles must obviously be always with us, and architects had of necessity to make a careful study of them. Before undertaking to write a book one must at least become acquainted with the alphabet, and even some knowledge of grammar is desirable. In these days many architects, and not only the younger ones, rightly attached much more importance to style in designing than to "correctness" of any one of the styles. Modern buildings should primarily fulfil modern requirements, and the better they did this the more likely were they to be works of art. With regard to Mr. Sumner's humorous remarks about architects and creation, he would only say that if the Creation had ended at the third day humanity would have been saved a lot of trouble!

Sir Wm. RICHMOND, who also replied, said he quite agreed with what had been said by one gentleman, that the matter rested a very great deal with the public. There was one instance of the overweighing of public opinion that came conspicuously before his notice when he was a

member of the committee appointed to arrange for a memorial to Mr. Gladstone. He undertook to frame a careful statement of what the monument should be. In the first place he held that Mr. Gladstone should be represented from the larger and broader point of view—not only as a statesman, but as a lover of literature and as a refined and cultured Englishman. The suggestion he made was this: Obtain a small site in St. James's Park; get the best architect they could to design a beautiful little building; get the best sculptor they could to make the best effigy, recumbent and studious instead of representing him in a state of emotion—that was to say, to depict him resting from his labours, with representations round about him in the chamber of all that had helped to make his life as interesting as it was. There was £60,000, a sum with which a great deal could have been done. Did they accept his ideas? No. What they would have in deference to the public wish was a gesticulating statue. Several such had been erected, one in Edinburgh—he believed they refused to have one in Ireland. But Mr. Gladstone must always be represented as being in the House of Commons. As long as the English public took that view of the man, and regarded him as a specialist in life, so long would it be impossible to shake off that "specialism" and memorialise the man on account of his achievements in literature and his attainments in learning. Sir William proceeded to offer some remarks on fresco painting, and spoke of the value of the yolk of egg as a preservative against the action of the atmosphere. He reminded them that a great interest centred around the recent discoveries of paintings in Crete, and mentioned that he had approached the Hellenic Society and had offered to go to Crete and make copies of these pictures, which were supposed to date from 800 years before Homer. If the Institute would allow him on a future date he would have pleasure in addressing them on this interesting subject at length.

Mr. MULLINS confined himself only to the point raised by Mr. Sumner, remarking that he would not like to see the statues removed; for, although they were not decorative, they were at any rate free from the most annoying sculptural features.

The CHAIRMAN said it spoke well for the dawn of the new century that such a discussion should have taken place that day. There was considerable truth in the remark that the public wanted educating, and that education could come through literature. It was the great revival of literature that finally aroused the Renaissance in Italy. At the same time a good deal depended on architects to foster that education. At all events it showed great prospects for art in the new century that there should be so strong a desire for architects, painters, and sculptors to join hand in hand in making art abreast of the times.

THE IDEAL CITY.

By HALSEY RICARDO, MRS. BASIL HOLMES (read by the Right Hon. the EARL OF MEATH),
W. D. CARÖE, M.A., F.S.A. [F.], and T. STIRLING LEE.

I. GENERAL SURVEY. By HALSEY RICARDO.

THE object of my Paper to-night is to try and precipitate, by means of discussion and suggestion, some conclusions as to what an ideal city should be, and also some agreement as to what a city should not contain that set up any claims to be beautiful. What is it we want? We go up and down this city of London, for instance, open-eyed and open-mouthed, eager to observe and loud in our expressions of disapproval; but what *do* we want? What are our ideals? Abstract disapproval is so easy, and often so unhelpful—almost any one of us can condemn, but when bidden to specify alterations, difficulties—the *difficulties* in fact—at once begin to appear. Are we agreed as to what we want? And by we I do not only mean architects, I mean amateurs of architecture, cultivated people, men of taste, those who have given thought to the matter, made their observations on other towns and digested them, County Councillors, all those who have the care and the guardianship of this our city. What is it you want, and are you agreed upon it? What are your ideals? We architects want to know. They are your ideals that are being carried out. Architecture, so far as it is living art, is the realisation of the aims and needs of those that produce it, and the vernacular architecture of any given period is the index of the general feeling and temper of that age. The few sporadic attempts to do scholarly, antiquarian, or reactionary work have little influence on contemporary work, except where it happens to find itself in sympathy with those views; the great mass of building and construction generally is the true exponent of the popular view of architecture. Are you content? and, if so, why do you grumble? We talk of a city being beautiful, but we smile at the idea of making London so. Why? Even if, in these humble-minded days, that were too much to propose, could we not, if we wished, prevent its growing uglier? As it is, London gets more and more hideous every day. We never see an old house threatened with demolition but what we have to fear a loss in its successor; we never see a concerted design in architecture, such as some of our squares, a few streets like Stratford Place and others, but we know their harmony is soon to be disturbed, and that quality of unity got by gracious co-operation will be burst in upon and flung into the gutter. We have buildings we call masterpieces—can we not at least preserve them unharmed? We allow the appearance of Somerset House to be defaced by mean additions. We talk of alterations to Waterloo Bridge; Hawksmoor's Church is undermined by a railway station; the moment a monument comes in the way of what is called the "convenience of the public" it is doomed and disappears.

Is it true, is it probable, that we cannot have what we want? What is it stands in the way? It isn't money. We can afford to have our way. We hear ourselves described as an indomitable people, and we accept the epithet with complacency; it is not from want of saying that we know we are rich. We may not be an artistic people, but we are good organisers and governors, and such a standard of magnificence as Rome achieved might be ours, did we desire it. The trouble is that we are not agreed as to what we want,

and we are not sure that we ought to want it. Directly we are all agreed upon some public matter, an architecture springs up in response, and according to the quality of the sentiment so is its interest. The National Conscience has for long been deeply stirred by the sight of helpless suffering, and the hospitals we have built to alleviate that and to increase our knowledge as to its prevention form one of the contributions of fine living architecture to the nineteenth century. So, too, are the great asylums. The care and thought, the quintessence of medical observation and research, have been gathered up and sublimed into formulated necessities, which have dominated the buildings erected in compliance, and by their insistence have given strength, and history, and interest to these structures.

Other contributions to the architecture of our time are our Board schools, museums, public libraries, and technical institutes, based also on a popular desire to improve the conditions of our life. Abate something of the virtue of the impulse, and the standard of interest in style of architecture falls immediately. The theatres, restaurants, and gin palaces, all rise in response to the popular call, and the nobleness of the demand dictates, in proportion, the nobility of the architecture. But in these instances there is, broadly speaking, a general agreement and codification of our desires; it is not so as regards the general treatment of our city. What is the view one is to take of London? That it is a vast workaday centre, from which all who are fortunate enough flee, after the day's work is done, to a bed in the country. If so, let us at once set about accentuating the position and importance of the railway stations, let us widen and straighten the routes between them, let us concentrate within a ring, if possible, the industrial nucleus, and separate the residential from it with an insulating zone of open space. We shall not make the city beautiful, it is true, but we might possibly its suburbs.

The day has gone by when the city was walled round for shelter and defence, and the great gates of old times have been replaced now by those huge vomitories—the railway termini. But the gates of the walled city were prominent features both from within and without: their purpose was unmistakable and resulted in characteristic form. Cannot we do as much for our railway stations? Merely to clear away a wide space in front of them and to make the route spacious and direct, would do much to give them distinction. Although I myself repudiate the idea of treating London as a mere workshop, still it is at least a definite treatment, a definite conception, and definition is what is at present so forcibly lacking in the handling of our city. The anxious, fevered scuttle from station to office, and from office back again to catch the train, is not a particularly fine idea, and is not likely to bring about particularly fine results; but, poor as they would be, they would be preferable to the present welter and the sense of compromise got from adjusting small individual claims. Or shall we take the view of London that it is a place to be proud of, and that we mean to be proud of it and keep it as a source of pride? There are many things that would justify us in this attitude—the river and some of the bridges that span it, and the Embankment that confines it; the Abbey, the Cathedral, the many churches and public buildings, some few of our squares and streets—possibly our parks.

And what should we do? Well, I am talking of the Ideal City, and I permit myself some flights of fancy that may be condemned as not altogether practical, though I try to keep on the hither side of Utopia, and so I answer, "Keep them." Keep our public buildings, keep our bridges, our squares, and our streets (those that we are agreed upon as embellishments of our city), keep them as they stand, at least for the present. As they are the subjects of our pride, let us treat them so; let the access to them be obvious and direct. Take the river for example. Let it be embanked on both sides, and let us have occasional glimpses of it from the Strand, wider and less squalid than the few grudging peeps which we can with

difficulty now get. We are incessantly increasing the span of its bridges to facilitate the water traffic, let us have a traffic that may be pleasant to the eye and handy to the passenger.

A swift service of small steamboats, trim and tidy, would help to relieve the congestion of our streets, and in many weathers and to many people would be a welcome alternative to the pavement. I said "trim and tidy" because on the grounds, seemingly, that we are rich and industrious we cannot afford to be clean and decent, and have not the time to be bothered with the necessary trouble; so London is disgusting and smelly owing to our slovenliness. The pride in a neat and perfect turn-out still clings to the stable, the harness-room, and the coach-house, and, by an association of ideas, somewhat affects the railway train; but the pavement is a fixed, interminable spittoon, and the tops of omnibuses a travelling one. In my ideal city, my impracticable Utopia, I would have a higher standard of cleanliness and scavenging. I would have more pageantry, more processions; and I would make many of them go by water. The Mayor and his state barges should be a familiar sight on the Thames. And I should like more music, especially on the water. The organ-grinder, the solo instrumentalist, "the German band," and all such small enterprise I would banish utterly from the streets, as well as yelling rufians, street cries, and newspaper pitches; but in compensation I would increase the quantity of music already provided by the County Council, and I would provide a supply of kiosks in the streets where people could buy their papers in peace. We are surely all agreed that noise and disorder are ugly features in a city as well as in a house; and yet we permit great shouting letters, winking and glaring lights, every form of eye-torture that may sear itself indelibly on the brain—for the object of many of these advertisements is that you may never forget them again for the rest of your life. In the Ideal City there would be a control over these street distractions, so as to secure some uniformity of effect. Nor should the streets preserve their haphazard character, so far as their general growth and expansion may give us chance for correction. The great streams of traffic should cross each other at right angles. The railway stations, the great creators of the swift-going traffic, should be recognised and their influence accepted, and the shortest direct routes to them taken in hand and developed to meet the case.

But life is not all a hurrying from one anthill to another; there is such a thing as leisure and the enjoyment of it, there is such a thing as work which may be done deliberately and in quiet. Let us preserve, then, the back-waters and retreats, where we can find them in London, and ensure that they shall not be arbitrarily invaded. They should be the shelters of our monuments. Each year we erect fresh statues in memory of famous men, but we have nowhere to put them, and they stand in the howling chaos of our streets, pitiable and helpless, horribly misplaced—or else they are thrust out of sight in narrow streets or chance corners. What a terrible misprision of their qualities this argues! It is part of the same temper that treats a piece of sculpture, an obelisk, or a fountain quite without reference to the site it has to occupy or its proper function, which is to add to, and accentuate, the general architectonic character of the locality it is to adorn. Architecture and decorative and monumental sculpture are not, as it seems to be thought, matters merely of detail, and immaterial how they may be combined, having no necessary connection. Architecture in our cities should be the expression of our ideas, the ideas of a community: our corporate, not our individual desires. The aspect of our streets concerns us all, and such individuality as there may be in it is pleasant to us, so far as it reflects the history of the locality and such human characteristics as are obviously gracious and kindly.

Lastly, there is the question of colour in our Ideal City—colour, natural and artificial—

both of great consequence as regards beauty, and both requiring broad concerted treatment. Natural colour resolves itself into grass, trees, shrubs, and flowers.

I will leave the parks as outside the province of my Paper and consider the use of grass and foliage as it concerns our streets and open spaces. That much can be done by a mere strip of grass is shown by the breadth in front of the National Gallery. But why should we pause there? Why not compress to half their area the fountain basins in Trafalgar Square, and turf the square—introducing, during the summer months, a few formal-shaped trees in tubs or boxes, to give contrast and variety to the green? Then the trees in our streets. At present they are planted at the sides of our streets, in the pavements, and the contours of the trees chosen are incompatible with the position assigned. They cannot grow properly without interfering with the light and air of the adjacent houses. Trees, such as planes, with spreading foliage, should be planted in the centre of the streets, where they can flourish unmutated and be of service in dividing the traffic. Where practicable, our streets should open to disclose a vista of green or a peep into the verdure of our squares or a glance on to the parterres of our Embankment. Of artificial colour little has been tried; and that little, done in experimental, isolated ways, is worse than useless. Colour must be treated broadly and in mass; in small quantities it is mainly irritating by its spottiness and the want of co-operation with the rest of its surroundings. Colour, quite as much as any other quality of architecture, must be used to express not merely individual whim and fancy, but must symbolise some general purpose and aspiration. Consequently, if we are to have colour in our streets, we must treat it heraldically. This has been recognised in some measure already, where colour has been employed by bodies of men—such as the State, vestries, parish councils, railway and other companies. Here in London, each parish colours its lamp-posts the parish colours—the dust and water carts carry the proper parochial bearings and legends; throughout Great Britain scarlet is the official tincture of the Post Office, black and white the traditional heraldry of the Coastguard stations. Our railway trains and our omnibuses tell by their colour the companies to which they belong and the routes they take. We have London already divided up into various divisions—electoral, parochial, and the like. Let us take advantage of these and display those divisions outwardly to the eye. Already the parish lamp-posts, and other obstacles, are distinguished from each other by pattern and colour; we might go farther and define the boundaries of the parish by the colour of the area railings, and some form of superposed tint or quartering in part might define the electoral divisions. Moreover, the vestry hall and parish library would gather up in concentrated form the accepted heraldry of their office and locality, making them landmarks in the neighbourhood by the splendid richness of their colour, containing in their accumulation the separate badges and symbols elsewhere distributed through the locality, and explaining in the sum of their achievements the various voices whose utterances form the chorus of civic life.

Many are the Ideal Cities that might be shadowed forth—but our first concern is to settle what is to be our attitude towards the city as at present. Are we here on sufferance only, or do we mean to reside in it and consequently make it worth residing in? This point settled, the conditions of our residence will help to formulate our ideal, and by organised co-operation we can work towards this end; and once clear in our minds what we want, we can push confidently towards the fulfilment.

II. PARKS AND OPEN SPACES.

Prepared by MRS. BASIL HOLMES, Secretary of the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association, and read by the Right Hon. the EARL OF MEATH, Chairman of the Association.

IT is difficult in the course of a quarter of an hour to speak of work which has been going on in our country for several centuries, or rightly to convey any idea of the magnitude of the need for open spaces, and the various manners in which succeeding generations have endeavoured or have neglected to meet this need. The tendency to congregate into towns has always been in existence, but there has also been a corresponding desire on the part of the people to spend their holidays and the unoccupied hours of their working days in the fields and amongst the trees and hedges. The early chroniclers of English history describe all manner of sports in the fields, the making of spring garlands, May-day feasts and rejoicings in the woods, and many pleasures and pastimes on the open lands, the moors or commons, surrounding the towns and villages. The "open space movement" has been represented during the past three or four hundred years by innumerable struggles to keep free from encroachment such public lands as the Moorfields, on the north side of the City of London, and the commons, heaths, and forests throughout England, by ancient enactments limiting the increase of towns and the proximity of houses, by the opening of the royal parks, by the formation of square gardens and pleasure grounds, by the provision of fore-courts or back yards to both small and large houses, and by public and private benefactions and legacies of lands to be dedicated to the people as village greens, commons, parks, or allotments. During the nineteenth century, when the development of the towns became so extraordinarily rapid, a more vigorous effort was needed to provide breathing spaces for their inhabitants; and since the year 1847 many Acts of Parliament have been passed relating wholly or partly to the preservation, acquisition, or maintenance of open spaces. Voluntary societies have come into existence to preserve or provide public recreation grounds, with the result that large parks and commons have been secured in and around our towns; churchyards, squares, and other small spaces have been laid out amongst the streets; while trees have been planted and seats have been placed in the public thoroughfares. But the ideal citizens of an ideal city would not be content with such spasmodic efforts and such varied methods of procedure. They would provide open spaces in a systematic manner from the time of the commencement of the building of their cities. And I can only hope to throw out a few hints as to the way in which this might be accomplished.

The plan so much in vogue, some fifty or a hundred years ago, of building houses in "squares" has much to commend it. But such squares should not surround gardens enclosed with railings, to which entrance is only allowed to the tenants of a certain limited number of houses. The square gardens should resemble the Continental "places"—open day and night, provided with grass, trees, fountains, flower-beds, and seats, and, like the surrounding streets, under the control and patrol of the police. The wider roads should be planted with trees, either near the houses or in a double row in the centre of the carriage way; this would afford shelter in rain and shade in sunshine. All the public elementary schools should have good playgrounds attached, open to all comers out of school hours; and in addition to these there should be separate spaces, playing fields or open-air gymnasia, provided for children, with proper instruction in the use of gymnastic apparatus, so that it might be impossible for any house in the city to be situated more than a quarter of a mile from a public playground. And these playgrounds should be attractive as well as useful,

with a part set aside for trees and shrubs, flowers and seats. No large division or ward of the ideal city should be without its park, capable of being illuminated by night, where broad expanses of grass might be seen, and where stretches of water in lakes or streams might bring refreshment to the eye. The public seats should be in groups, in well-lighted parts of the thoroughfares; the drinking fountains and troughs should be artistically designed and pleasant to look upon; outdoor annexes to the restaurants should be encouraged; and every effort should be made to beautify the streets—not monotonously, but with taste and variety, and above all to preserve the natural beauties of any space or garden which may be secured for the people.

What may be termed the *modern open-space movement* started before the close of the first half of the nineteenth century. The late Sir Edwin Chadwick, that great pioneer of sanitary reform, made a report in 1842 on the "Effect of Public Walks and Gardens on the Health and Morals of the Lower Classes," and he then used the phrase "open spaces." He also advocated the preservation as public land of the burial-grounds in towns when they should be disused. It was greatly due to his careful investigations and reports that most of these graveyards were closed in 1853 and the succeeding years, although another twenty-two years elapsed before any of them were converted into public gardens. Now, in London alone, there are over one hundred open to the public, nearly all being attractively laid out. Some of the square gardens have also been thrown open, notably those belonging to the Duke of Westminster (owing to the wisdom and generosity of the late Duke) and those on the estate of the Marquis of Northampton; and they now number, in London, twenty-seven.

I need hardly dwell on the very great success that has attended the work of the Commons Preservation Society, the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association, and the Open Spaces branch of the Kyrle Society. These agencies have, by their labours and their example, stirred up such public authorities as H.M. Office of Works, the London County Council, the Metropolitan vestries, and the provincial county councils and municipal bodies, until it is now possible to say that the desire to acquire open spaces or recreation grounds is universal, especially in the towns and their suburbs. It is still a little difficult for village communities to understand their need of securing definite playing-fields or public gardens when there is no green or common for recreation; but the idea has taken root in the towns, and will in time extend to the villages. Full powers are now given to these public bodies, and to trustees of private estates, to give, to acquire, to lay out, or to maintain open spaces, and information on any point connected with this subject will be gladly supplied by the Secretary of the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association, 83, Lancaster Gate, W. And here I may add that organisations such as this one, which, during the past seventeen and a half years, has carried through upwards of four hundred successful undertakings, are much needed in the provinces. A few of the larger towns have their open-space societies, but in most of them there is no voluntary effort. Many officers of municipal bodies are strangely ignorant of the powers these bodies possess by law, and are glad of information from those who can supply it. Again, it is often possible for a voluntary body to bring some particular case to the notice of the local authority. It is heard of privately, and the society can carry out preliminary transactions of a private nature and save an open space which might otherwise be lost. The members of a public body, who have a score of other matters to see to, cannot be always on the watch for opportunities of securing open spaces, of preventing illegal encroachments, or of beautifying the streets. It is the sole business of an open-space society to do so; and such a society, working in a friendly way with the landowners of the neighbourhood and the members of the town or district council, can do an immense amount of useful work with but little expenditure.

There is much room for improvement in the way we build our towns and allow our suburbs to stretch out from them, ruthlessly swallowing up the rural surroundings and picturesque estates. But if the public mind is educated to the idea of preserving what is beautiful and of cultivating what is wholesome, if landowners will only realise that the value of building land rises in proportion to the amount of timbered open space adjoining it, if people will understand that the more recreation grounds there are the quieter and less crowded each one will be, I feel sure that the architects of the future will so arrange their buildings as to preserve trees instead of destroying them, and that the cities of the future will no longer be vast accumulations of monotonous rows of houses, but will be interspersed with smiling gardens and healthy playgrounds, and surrounded by parks and woods and playing-fields.

III. STREETS AND BRIDGES.

CONSIDERED IN CONNECTION WITH OUR *UN-IDEAL CITY*.

By W. D. CARÖE, M.A., F.S.A.

THE very limited time at our disposal for the discussion of two very large subjects tempts me to the method of a recent manifesto by a notable politician in retirement, whereby the soul of suggestive brevity seems to lie in the promulgation of abstruse queries, answerable by each man for himself. Thus—in regard to my first subject :

Shall our streets be straight or curved ?

Shall we adopt formal architecture, or the picturesque, or is indeed Palladian the only possible ?

Do we approve of Hausmannizing ancient cities ?

Are boulevards beautiful and entirely conducive to the dignified display of architecture ?

Is the dignity of our streets to be measured only by their width, or the height of the buildings ?

How can we prevent the finest building sites passing into the hands of the architect speculator, whose productions are too often a menace to the continued sanity of those who care, and sometimes it seems also of those who are responsible for their stability ?

How far shall street architecture or our public monuments be controlled, as in Paris, by a central authority, and how shall that authority be constituted ?

How can we instil into County Councils and Corporations dealing with vast architectural problems, an intelligent appreciation of the accurate procedure which will ensure certainly successful results without doing indignity to our art or our honourable profession ?

All these and many more springs of useful inquiry I commend to each one of you, believing that Lord Rosebery's method is perhaps more useful to us to-day than that of Socrates, and that individual taste and openings for a varying treatment under varying circumstances will help us to more fertile discussion as well as to more fertile result than any suggestions I might be able to lay before you within those limits of your time which I am permitted to occupy.

Intertwined with—indeed, comprehending—all these queries is the one, “How can we interest and instruct the public in architectural scholarship ?” This Mr. Reginald Blomfield will deal with to-morrow, but it suggests to me to declare to you my devout belief that the finest street is not the widest street, and not necessarily even the airiest street, or the one best adapted to traffic, but first the one which has the most beautiful buildings beautifully

placed, and that every step taken in pursuit of our glorious ideals of light, air, safety, and convenience, which has even in attaining these turned us away from this more glorious hope and more desirable goal of beauty, is a step lost and an opportunity wasted. In which connection I will make my only reference to the archæology of this wide subject, and bid you compare La Rue de Fèves, at Lisieux, with our own airified and widespreading Whitechapel.

The chapter of lost opportunities in our streets is indeed a long one. So often might some beauty in small as well as large things have accompanied usefulness, and we may range in our quest from the Tate Gallery to the cabman's shelter, from the cast-iron trimmings of the Tower Bridge to the cast-iron tunic of the London policeman. Most true it is that all the manifold and pressing necessities of modern city life in our streets combine to show us what we are in our appreciation of a city's dignity: the monuments, the advertisements, the open spaces, the trams, the omnibuses, the lamps and lamp-posts—aye! even the post-boxes and the peelers, to say nothing of the telegraph and tram wires. Who shall say that we have educated our appreciations in these matters? or that they have not a large bearing upon our external city life, as we would wish to see and let others see it? To take an instance. The lamp-posts of formidable design cannot by night destroy the decorative chain which seems to thread together through the maze of London streets; but what might those standards have done to enhance it by day had they been produced from a design of graceful simplicity? There seems an opening for better things in the recent Act obtained by the City, conferring the power to place lamps and wires upon house fronts. But how can any self-respecting householder (save him who holds a "public") welcome upon his house front a lamp designed in the same spirit (to give three examples) as the new arc-light standards of the vestry of St. Martin's, the drain ventilators which tower in unsupported hideousness along the Chelsea Embankment and elsewhere, or those bloated posts, whose nightly office it is to cast lurid gleams upon our most admirable Whitehall Charles I., designed as these are to dwarf and disfigure the proportions of pedestal and statue? To the official mind every statue seems in need of these overpowering torch-bearers, and with Charles I. and Lord Strathnairn thus officially glorified, we may expect to behold the Duke of York and Lord Nelson each with his quota of proportionately prodigious satellites, lest perchance we may overlook some shade of our heroes' sky-seeking glory when we stand to study these things upon starless nights or in November gloom.

Further, let me instance the lack of imagination we display in the laying out of open spaces, often cleared at great cost. Are asphalt and latrines either satisfactory or picturesque when they appear as the exclusive features, perhaps eked out with a £5 penalty seat? I am not claiming much for that profession of which I am proud to be a humble member, when I say that there are scores of able designers within it who could show how such things might be better done if only they were given a chance.

And what of the *Posters*—those aching sores—the poor man's picture gallery?—so claimed by his false friends and tasteless toadies. This is a matter upon which I must refer you to Mr. Richardson Evans, the kingpost of that admirable society called "Scapa" (The Society for Checking the Abuses of Public Advertising), of which I doubt not every person in this room is (or ought to be) an active member. Mr. Evans has most lucidly illuminated this question from time to time in the public press and elsewhere. But in brief, let us clear our minds, and cease canting about the poor man's pictures and the rich manufacturer's glorious liberty of puffing (at our expense) his nostrums. Shall we not rather assure ourselves that the wanton and vulgar disfigurement of our streets can only increase the vulgarity of those who are so constituted as to appreciate such things, and let us vote at least that, if they must be, the wealthy puffer shall be taxed highly for the infliction of his puffs. In our Ideal City,

where all our street architecture will be beautiful, will we admit such imposition unheeded? In proportion as we take no pains to regulate the monstrous vulgarity of our hoardings, do we confess our lack of care, of pride, and of instinct for civic dignity and progress.

It would be inappropriate to deal with this subject of streets without special reference to the great new thoroughfare and the opening out of the Strand by the London County Council, the largest enterprise of its kind recently attempted, and one which may be fruitful of much that we desire. Here we may perhaps turn our backs for a while upon Lord Rosebery's witful method in at least formulating hopes for the final direction these new opportunities may take.

The question of straight streets or curved arises when the plan concerns new cuttings to be made, not the following or widening of old thoroughfares, formed as they mostly are upon the curved lines of once wandering country lanes or dykes.

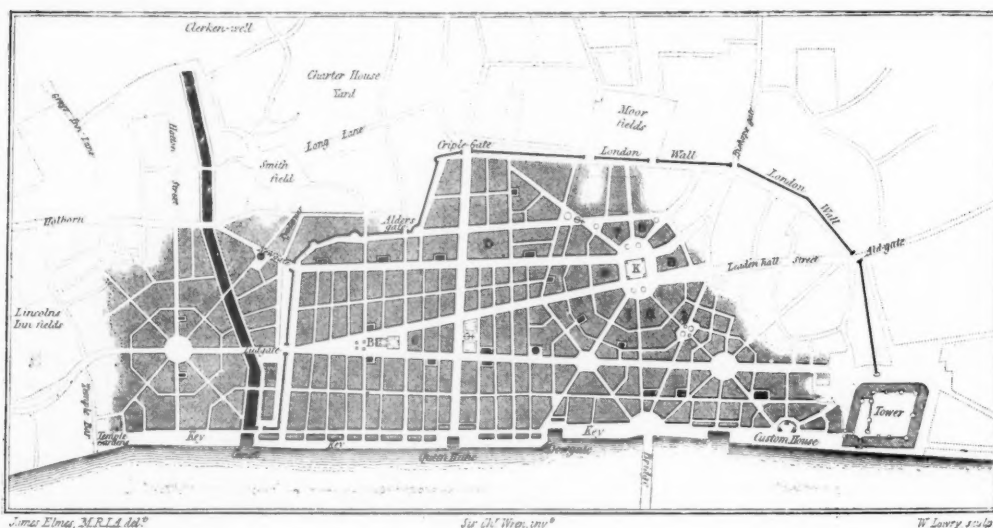
Now the cutting of a straight street through a district already irregularly streeted at once lands us in the difficulty of all kinds of awkward and canted corners. Nothing can be more unhappy than the sudden ending of a large building in a sharp acute angle. Instances are numerous showing how this important point has been neglected through a lack of architectural instinct in the initial laying down of new streets—in many instances where it is clear that a very slight change of plan might have brought about results as much more desirable from a practical as they would certainly have been from an architectural point of view. I would make an incidental point upon this head—that however experienced in practical considerations may be the permanent official adviser to the Local Authority, yet an architect of repute and sound judgment should be associated with him in the conception of new streets. I would desire to insist that a graceful sweep, whereby awkward corners and angles are avoided, is better than the sacrifice of everything, even in the main thoroughfare, to mere straightness. I would further bring forward the simple suggestion of sweeping old side streets into the new main one in such a manner that graceful junctions are secured, which seems indeed an elementary expedient, but not one on that account the more observed or the less important.

I personally concur unhesitatingly in the desire expressed by the London County Council for a monumental treatment in dealing with the Strand island and its approaches, and would gladly see such treatment continued as far as Holborn. But a monumental treatment need not mean the continuation of one uniform design throughout the whole length. Might not each block between the intersecting side streets be treated separately as a whole, it being essential in this case (as it is indeed in the whole matter) that the exterior, at any rate, of each such block should be under the control of one competent architect? Thus we might secure a result at once monumental, varied, and interesting, and not of a more than Parisian monotony. To some extent a similar dealing with broad frontages was adopted by the late Duke of Westminster in Mayfair, and but for the fussy influence of the terra-cotta craze, which happened to come at an unfortunate period in the development of the scheme, the work done might have been even more successful than it is. In their scheme, however finally attained, the London County Council must bear in mind rigidly to control the future alteration of façades and roofs, as well as their erection, or we may get a repetition of Regent Street, where excellent intentions, also upon the lines I have indicated, have led to disastrous results, in the hands of unsympathetic or ill-trained modern maulers and re-designers.

I must not in this city of London conclude this part of my paper without brief reference to that most brilliant example of skill in the laying out of a city as proposed by Sir Christopher Wren for the rebuilding of London after the Great Fire of 1666. This is deft indeed in the avoidance of those errors to which I have referred. The introduction of polygonal figures concentrating upon important points is so cleverly conceived that I have had the plan

reproduced and appended, so that those not already intimate with it may study it for themselves at leisure. It forms a more complete Paper upon the subject than any I could devise to lay before you, and shows how in skilful hands ancient sites, boundaries, gateways, and streets may all be brought into order and made to contribute to an ideal whole.

There is no subject which excites my architectural instincts, pleasures, or regrets more than the contemplation of a bridge, be it of stone, wood, or iron. There exists what I venture to call a practical poetry about such a structure, nobly conceived, appealing to all those subtle senses set in motion by architectural appreciation. And it is not to be gainsaid that every age up to our own which has included bridge-building among its arts and sciences has unequivocally recognised this fact. I recall to you in support of this statement the numerous examples, from the Roman era, onwards through Mediævalism, which loved to hallow the



PLAN FOR REBUILDING THE CITY OF LONDON ACCORDING TO THE DESIGN PROPOSED BY SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN, SHOWING THE SITUATION OF THE PRINCIPAL STREETS AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

■ Churches. ♀ Markets. A, Wood Market. B, St. Paul's. C, Doctors' Commons. D, Guildhall. EE, Goldsmiths. F, Post Office. G, Excise Office. H, Mint. I, Insurance. K, Exchange.

bridge by the chapel, down even to our own London Bridge. And while it is also true that the inspiration which has ever pervaded bridge-building has not left untouched some of our earlier engineers—among the honourable roll of whom I would name Rennie of London Bridge, Telford of Menai Bridge, Brunel of his Cornish trestles, Adams of that exquisite Eskutér Bridge at Buda-Pesth—yet it may not be denied that with the change from the direction of the architect to that of the engineer has come that lack of appreciation of beauty and fitness, resulting in those hideous bridges which disfigure our roads, our rivers, and our railways.

Not for one moment do I depreciate the vast benefits to the human race conferred upon it by modern engineering skill. Had they only been as artistically successful in constructing their bridges as English engineers have been in the outward forms of their best locomotives we should have no complaint, but only admiration for all their work. But the problem was not the same. Quite absent from the locomotive, into the engineering problems of the bridge

enters the element of architectural scholarship; and this the engineers have, with a few noble exceptions, made no attempt to master. When the importance of an architectural treatment has been recognised it seems generally to have been relegated to the office sweeper, who has swept up the torn pages of mutilated text-books or manufacturers' catalogues and failed to consign them to the waste-paper basket. Albert Bridge, Battersea, Blackfriars, Charing Cross, Cannon Street, Chelsea, are specially our ABC of how not to build bridges; and Vauxhall brings us nearly to the other end of an alphabet which terminates in Westminster. But it is easier to reckon the other way, when we find we have only two bridges out of seventeen within the Metropolitan area which are worthy to be named among the monuments of London.

I wish in these few remarks specially to insist upon the essentially monumental character of a great bridge; and I would urge upon our Members of Parliament, who grant bridge-building powers to railway companies, and upon our County Councillors, to excite their sluggish imaginings and rise to the level of recognising at once and for all time that a bridge across the Thames is upon the same plane of monumental and architectural importance as St. Paul's itself, and demands the same developed architectural power to design or to embellish it. As regards the railway bridges, admitting fully their necessity, there is no excuse. In laying down a railway through a city the cheapest thing is to bridge the river. It does not compare with the buying up of land and claims, coupled with land construction. Yet the public has to pay in outraged sensibility and higher rates, all because of the imperturbable callousness of our Parliamentary representatives. Even now our peers have just allowed a Bill to pass their honourable House, whereby that Charing Cross monstrosity is to spread itself into Northumberland Avenue. No safeguard whatever is given to the public—not even advantage taken of the lever secured by a previous Act, which, in any widening, compelled the Company to purchase the block of houses facing the Strand.

But we must admit that a railway company is not bound, in these ultra-commercial days, to hold anything sacred, save dividend; but is that an excuse for the direct representatives of our interests, who control the revenues we provide by our contributions to civic progress and order?

Why, I ask, are the County Council recognising the architectural importance of the Strand improvement and denying the architectural importance of Vauxhall, and, I suppose, Lambeth Bridge to follow? If the architecture in the Strand will cost one million, that at Vauxhall will cost at least half! Why should they assign the one to the united efforts of eight selected architects, and be content with the other as a mere piece of copybook design—in which, in the words of our premier novelist, "that rank which forms, as it were, its highest grace and ornament is mingled and confused with the viler parts of architecture"?

In no sense do I depreciate the importance of the engineer's control of all the bridge-building problems which depend upon engineering science; and if the engineer can prove himself the peer in architectural skill of those others whom I have named I am happy indeed to leave the whole work in his hands. But, as the matter now stands, and with the elaborated design before us, the action of the London County Council is wholly inexplicable and opposed to the public interest. It is far from conducive to their being trusted as the central authority in whose hands the improvement of London and her monumental architecture may be left indiscriminately or ungrudgingly.

It would be impossible not to refer, in this connection, to the new Pont Alexandre III. at Paris, in which the architects, sculptors, and engineers have collaborated so ably together. The conditions laid down were such that a bridge of steel construction was inevitable, and MM. Résac and Alby had resort to a single span of cast steel ribs, almost going back,

constructively, to our Southwark model. To my own idea the architects and sculptors have been more successful in their share of the work than the engineers, because the latter have not been fully conscious of the limits of their material in appropriate decorative use. The total result, however, is such as to make us jealous of this bridge as the outcome of one of those things they manage better in France—merely because they recognise the simple logic of facts and the teaching of experience and history.

I hope for no more from these few remarks than that they will suffice to stimulate discussion upon subjects which cannot fail to secure your interest. Whether you are architects or otherwise, dwellers in cities or enjoying country life and pursuits, I need not remind you how in these days of strained effort, vulgarity, hydra-headed, thrusts itself oppressively into the daily life of all of us, and none of the arts suffers from the unwelcome intrusion so much as architecture. And our St. Michael, our hope in wrestling with the monster, must ever be an accurate and refined scholarship, which—be we mere plodders, whose best aspiration is but for a laboured success, or gifted with the imagination and resource of genius—will guide us always down a sure path, and the spread of whose wings will bring back to us beauty in our streets and bridges and all that appertains to our cities. Throughout all history the growth of civic dignity, monumentally and artistically expressed—in other words, the arts of peace—have ever been held indicative of a nation's position, power, and development in civilisation; and, if not always of rectitude in the past, let this be our added incentive in a new century of Christian effort.

IV. PUBLIC MONUMENTS. By T. STIRLING LEE.

Opening.

"The common problem—yours, mine, everyone's—
Is, not to fancy what were fair in Life
Provided it could be; but finding first
What may be, then find how to make it fair
Unto our means—a very different thing.
No abstract, intellectual plan of Life,
Quite irrespective of Life's plainest law;
But one a man, who is man and nothing more,
May lead: Idealise away:
You're welcome; nay, you're wise."

BROWNING.

Subject.

A FAIR City: is this building castles in the air? No; but from high thoughts and our imaginations we build foundations for its possibilities: foundations have been laid for all time to build upon; materials and all things necessary are to man's hands; then why idealise, but realise the actual.

The Natural.

It is natural for some to build, some to carve, some to paint, some to sing, to write and speak in words. We are thinking of our builders of cities; to build, then, is to some natural; it is the sport and pastime of many childhood hours. How many days he satisfies himself in building with his toys—his castles made with cards, always striving to go one better than the Tower of Babel, higher and higher; then the outburst of joy produced by the downfall, the

noise of its destruction! This natural gift in the boy, we see in the man, and find in nations; joy of some to build, the greatest satisfaction of some to pull down, to make a noise.

In nations as in man we find the natural, the ideal, and then the material, and from these periods we have the height to which its civilisation has reached and the depths to which it has fallen, monuments for all future ages, of a nation's infancy, maturity, decay.

The Growth.

The early settler by the riverside, or near the wood, first builds his hut; he names it after its natural surroundings, "the hut by the river," or "by the wood"; he works, and by his toil produces the fruits of the earth, it becomes his garden of riches; then the thinker, who looks up, "man the uplooking animal," he sees the sun, the moon, the stars, the seasons; from his thoughts he is led to idealise, to worship, and takes the natural to symbolise his highest aspirations, object for his worship, and strikes out to more perfect manhood, to build a home wherein may dwell his God; he builds his temples, his palaces, his monuments, which clothe his thoughts and express all his highest ideals, and from these grow the maturity of a race. With this evolution of the mind of man comes also the evolution of his morals, which he calls virtues, the causes of joy and happiness, the causes of evil and misery.

We can trace the history of nations, the causes of prosperity and the causes of decay. And it is natural for man from things seen to think and use his mind, and let the light of his soul dwell on the beautiful that it may live: the natural magnified to its ultimate to illustrate his ideas of the supernatural: the Egyptian his sun-god, light and life; the Greek with his *Zeús* (pure heaven) and his goddess Wisdom; the Florentine the Mother and Child, the ideal Maternity, and his love of labour—for was not his symbol of harmony of life the sound of the smith beating into instruments of music the crude metal of the earth? Take these five subjects: Light, Life, Wisdom, Maternity, Labour, and round them you can build all the highest thoughts of man and the religions of nations, which have been the subjects and themes for the monuments of all the great cities of the world. Take each subject to its ultimate, and you have the perfect actual—subjects fitted for the sculptor's art and worthy to be placed in your Ideal City.

Material.

But with power comes decay—the worship of the man, much self-glorification. The material man, not man's mind or soul, do we measure him by; but his material external is portrayed, which produces destruction to the great ideal. We then produce the bulb, no longer the flower that has made this city fair.

The Sculptor.

So we workers in clay, wood, stone, and metals are but the children of your city. We are, at the hand of the builder, to write in streets the great thoughts of your philosophers, the dreams of your poets, the great victories of your warriors, the ever-spreading influence of civilisation, its truth, its justice, and its liberties, that in figure these ideals may live in the crowded streets of your city. But to hand down the mere posthumous portrait of the man is to give to the world the shell without the kernel—not the ideal in which the sculptor's soul may live and breathe, but the dead, mechanical production of a dead thing.

Technic of the Sculptor.

Has the sculptor any ideal for our technical side? Does he reach out to any ultimate in his means of expression? We see he has his ideal subject; has he ideal rules for his practical work? He knows that life is governed by simple natural laws; so just as simply must this

child of nature express himself, and must govern every detail of his perfect work. It depends on the man, his mental vision. You may show him examples of the highest realisation of men's mind and hands, but he cannot reach them if his power of thought is not strong enough to produce the same conception. Take the pupil and the worker beside you: you can so transmit your thoughts and the way in which you see things that he can see just what you point out; but immediately he is left alone he falls back to his own range of vision.

Laws of Sculpture.

What are, then, these simple laws that govern the ultimate of the sculptor's expression? They are the combination in a work of three characteristics of the arts—architecture, sculpture, and painting. The dignity and the monumental of the architect, the simplicity of severity of line and form of the sculptor, the atmosphere of light and shade of the painter—all these we find in the great works realised by man in his maturity, and prove what is always said by great artists, "that there is but one art, but different means of expression."

Conclusion.

For subjects you take great abstract truths, for treatment you take the natural object and clothe it with its attributes to personify the unity of atoms into a grand whole; and by the eyes we see and the power we feel will be the result and nearness attained to our great ideal.

Carlyle.

The situation that has not its duty, its ideal, was never yet occupied by man. Yes, here in this miserable, despicable actual wherein thou even now standest, here or nowhere is thy ideal: Work it out therefrom. The ideal is in thyself; the impediment too is in thyself.

DISCUSSION.

Mr. E. A. GRUNING, *Vice-President R.I.B.A.*, in the Chair.

Mr. H. E. MILNER, F.L.S., Assoc.M.Inst.C.E. [H.A.], who had been asked to favour the Congress with an expression of his views on the subject during the discussion, read the following short paper:—

It is difficult to settle the point of attainment to be aimed at in the ideal city. There are certain conditions under which a segregation of people can live. A city cannot exist embracing only palaces and promenades, without workers entailing production and distribution, the gathering and accumulation of wealth, and ways of communication. In the generality of cases a city has grown from traders living together for convenience of traffic and for defence, and the nature of the traffic has been influenced by the natural features of the locality, and has grown by the fact of the place being suitable for shipping, for manufacturing, and for a trade centre. Few cities (and none has reached importance) have been built for residential purposes with trade as a supplemental consideration. One might more readily look for the ideal there, but the result has not been satisfactory. Washington is perhaps such an instance; but the feeling of monotony, in spite of the grandeur of some of the buildings, is very trying. It seems, then, that in a city one

must look for an accumulation of inhabitants of different degrees, requiring special adaptation to their mode of life, and consequently a conglomeration. I think, then, we can only lay down some broad rules for adoption.

A city might be advantageously placed on a plateau about 300 feet above sea-level, slightly sloping to the south-east, with a large wood four miles from its centre on the north-east side, on a light clay passing lower into rock. It might have at twenty miles' distance northward high hills preserved and forming a water source developing into a river, which would fall, producing power, to its junction with a navigable river five miles from the centre of the town. This centre of the town might be a park a mile in diameter, intersected by main roads and planted. It could be surrounded by Government buildings, churches, galleries, theatres, colleges, and behind these an inner elevated circular railway communicating with lines running north, south, east, and west, and with another circular railway two miles beyond.

Broad roads should radiate from the centre, intersecting public squares or gardens and planted, and I would not recommend planting trees as avenues by sides of roads, as their uneven growth

would cause waste of valuable land and prove eventually unhealthy and incommodious unless planted in wide, unflagged spaces with roads on each side.

There should be universal electric power supplied, and no smoke. All the supply of power and water and drainage, under one control, should be in subterranean passages, and in the busy parts special sunk roads for heavy traffic with over-bridges might be introduced. Warehouses and docks with the larger manufactories would be next the embanked river, and high enclosing boundary walls, especially next dwelling-houses, disallowed.

The tendency to build dwelling-houses to the westward has been universal, but with the absence of smoke this need not longer prevail, and the rich and poor quarters might be intermingled, though there will never be the equality which we may expect only in the realisation of the description of the perfect city pictured in the vision of St. John.

In an attempt to remodel an existing city I am of opinion that individual building must be left to those desiring to build and occupy their houses, for as taste and knowledge increase, so a better result will ensue; that manufacturers' premises must depend on the requirements of trade, but that a central authority should have control over power, water, and drainage, and have the right—which should be freely used—to dispossess and compensate for main lines of communication and the setting-aside of planting areas under a definite scheme.

Mr. OWEN FLEMING [A.], in proposing a vote of thanks to the authors of the Papers, said he could not help comparing, when the various ideals were sketched out, the actual with the ideal, and he almost despaired of their ever bringing the two into any sort of relation. When speaking of the city, he considered they were speaking of it as a whole, and they must not confine themselves to a city beginning at the Royal Exchange and ending at Chelsea. It existed on a wider scale, and to apply the term "ideal city" to districts such as Hoxton and Walworth, Bow, St. George's-in-the-East, and St. Luke's was as bitter a mockery as one could conceive. Referring to the Institute, he remarked that they had a great responsibility in the architectural development of the city, and this fact had been admitted by the London County Council and its committees, with excellent results so far as they could see. He gave three instances in which the Institute had formulated a definite line of policy, and remarked that the importance of that line of policy was very considerable, because if the Institute continuously and consistently impressed its view upon the Government and Municipal Councils who were entrusted with the carrying out of im-

provements at the right time, he considered they would gain a great deal more than they had in the past. In the case of the development of Whitehall the Institute was represented at the Government Committee, and a great many of the suggestions they made were carried out. It was entirely due to their action that the Westminster end improvement of Whitehall had been carried out in such an admirable way. The other end had not yet been done, and he ventured to suggest that the widening of the eastern end should receive careful consideration. The Mall would shortly be opened up, and other improvements must necessarily take place at that end. With regard to Mr. Ricardo's observations and suggestions for the development of Trafalgar Square, if the Institute could lay down a plan showing how the square could be laid out, reducing the size of the fountains and giving more greenery and trees, it would not be very difficult to carry out such a scheme. The Institute was also very much interested in the Holborn and Strand improvement. The Institute was the author of the approved scheme, and London was to be congratulated on the broad view which the Institute had shown in the detailed development of this great proposal. This scheme would form an important link in the chain of communication between the north and the south. It also had an important negative result, inasmuch as St. Mary's in the Strand was saved for all time; and as the southward traffic would probably be diverted down the eastern arm, they would very likely have to erect a bridge between Waterloo and Blackfriars, connecting with the Elephant and Castle. If that was carried out, the widening of Waterloo Bridge, which most architects dreaded, would be put on one side. Then with regard to the most difficult question of Vauxhall Bridge. It was certainly in a very unfortunate position, and Mr. Caröe was very severe on the County Council. It must be borne in mind that the Council in this matter were confronted not only with the Institute of Architects, but with the Institution of Civil Engineers, and the latter might not take the same view on the question of Vauxhall Bridge as did the former. Was it quite fair of this Institute to bring pressure to bear upon the Council in this way? Surely their engineering colleagues would not take the view that they were supreme in matters of architecture, and he would suggest that diplomacy should be used in this matter by the Institute sending ambassadors to the Institution of Civil Engineers in order that some agreement might be arrived at between the two professions. He had strong reason to believe that the Council would welcome such an agreement very heartily. As the matter at present stood, the Council must either take the side of architects or the side of the engineers.

The CHAIRMAN: In that case I would advise

the Council to take the advice of the Institute of Architects.

Mr. FLEMING, continuing, said he was only endeavouring as far as he could to give the view which he understood prevailed at Spring Gardens. He was rather sorry to refer to the fact that the energy of the Art Standing Committee seemed to be lessening. He did not see any report from them in the last publication of the Institute annual reports, and he regretted this, because they could exercise a considerable influence on public authorities if they took up questions at an early stage. There was one other question which he would like to refer to, and one which none of the speakers mentioned, but which appealed very closely to London architects. He referred to the housing of the working classes, which was becoming one of the great questions of the day. It had been discussed in Parliament, but without any very great conclusions being arrived at, and, so far as he could see, it would have to be dealt with in a very broad way. It was suggested to him the other day that architects had nothing to do with the housing question; but they certainly had; and if the Institute would appoint a committee to study the great problem he felt sure London would be benefited.

Mr. ARTHUR CATES [F.] said that, however agreeable it was to contemplate what might be, and even what ought to be, he did not think they would realise their ideals in this generation. With regard to the controversy respecting the designs of Vauxhall Bridge, he was surprised to hear Mr. Fleming say that there had been some conflict between the Institute and the Institution of Civil Engineers. He was not aware of any, or that the Institution of Civil Engineers had expressed any opinion upon the subject. If they had, it would have been regarding the engineering part of the bridge, and not its outward appearance and details. The Royal Institute of British Architects made representations to the London Council with regard to the architectural design and details, which were of vital importance, and it was a matter of very great regret, in the interest of the public, the Council, and all concerned, that more consideration had not been given to those representations than appeared to have been given. It would be a great misfortune if in the expenditure of so vast a sum of money as was proposed upon this bridge a public monument should be erected the architectural details of which would be open to criticism and would be unworthy of this great Metropolis. His acquaintance with the circumstances did not enable him to suggest that this would be the case with Vauxhall Bridge; but according to the criticism they had heard that evening it might be possible that its success would not be so great as they all desired. If any doubt existed, as seemed to be the case, it was certainly an obligation on the London Council to put aside all personal questions, and obtain the best advice

on these details, so as to prevent the possibility of another unsightly feature being added to those which already exist in this Metropolis. There was one point in the Earl of Meath's Paper which deserved very careful consideration. He said: "There is much room for improvement in the way we build our towns and allow our suburbs to stretch out from them, ruthlessly swallowing up the rural surroundings and picturesque estates." Then he went on with a little idealising, but his lordship might have emphasised his appeal very forcibly. We had allowed for many years past all our rural surroundings to be swept away in our suburbs, and picturesque estates to be ruthlessly swallowed up, without exercising any control whatever upon the manner in which this land was laid out for the profit of the greedy speculator. If we went a short distance from some towns we found small buildings erected close up to the edge of narrow roads, and these roads, as the town increased, developed into insanitary streets, especially when the smaller buildings were replaced by larger ones; and this led to vast expenditure of money in widening thoroughfares, which might have been saved if the land had been under municipal control, so that the frontages could have been set back and the streets widened before the buildings were erected. All round London estates had been laid out, or developed, to create ground-rents. Within the London district the actual control which was exercised over these estates was simply with regard to the minimum width of the road and the height of the buildings. There was no control whatever as to the direction of the streets, except the provision in the recent Building Act, which required that every new street should join another and be a direct thoroughfare. The speculator was allowed to lay out an estate and put as many houses upon it as he could, so as to get as many ground-rents as possible, and then to walk off with his profit and to say what a good stroke of business he had done. Surely, considering the great gain to the landlord by converting farm land into building land, it would not be unreasonable to place him under some obligation to provide some open space or recreation ground, and to improve the thoroughfares for the benefit of the population by the creation of which he made his fortune. This might be done by that control which was exercised in many Continental cities. If such a control as he had indicated had been exercised thirty years ago, how different would the aspect of Greater London be to-day! The districts in the east and south referred to by Mr. Fleming would not have been nearly so crowded with small tenements without any convenience or places of recreation. If the land was laid out in a proper way, it would be to the advantage of the landowner. It might be considered that this was an attack upon the right of property or an attempt

at confiscation. He would be the very last person to make such an attempt, but the landlord should be under such an obligation as he had suggested. And those who for their own great gain appropriated their lands for the habitations of the people should be compelled to provide on such lands adequate open spaces for the health and recreation of that population. As property had its rights, which should be treated with all respect, so it had no less its obligations; and as these had in the past been neglected and overlooked, so in the future they should be respected and enforced. They all heartily appreciated and were deeply indebted to the great landowners for what they had done. Without the wise control they had generally exercised in laying out their estates London would indeed have been a miserable city. To the great estates of the Crown, the Duke of Westminster, the Duke of Bedford, and many other great landowners, we are indebted for many of our open spaces, squares, and broad thoroughfares, which helped to make London, in some respects, agreeable. If this sort of thing could be enforced by general legislation upon all landlords—legislation placed in the hands of the London County Council—it would be a great advantage and benefit to the community.

Mr. CHARLES HADFIELD [F.] said he quite agreed with the remarks made about towns being erected in anything but an ideal way in the past, but precisely the same sort of thing seemed to be going on at the present time. He was interested in what Mr. Cates had said with regard to municipal control. Mr. Cates had spoken from a sound, legislative, and conservative point of view, and he was very much in sympathy with his remarks. He considered that a great deal more ought to be done, and would be done in this direction. Sheffield, in the days of his boyhood, was surrounded by beautiful scenery, but it was rapidly being crowded out of existence by the system of putting as many buildings upon the ground as possible. In London there was comparatively little of the ideal. In his opinion more widely extended powers should be accorded to the authorities for dealing with the greedy commercial speculator. Unless something were done, we should have, sooner or later, cause for regret at our present apathy. He hoped the outcome of this important discussion would be to strengthen the hands of the municipalities in this direction.

Mr. E. S. PRIOR said they had to deal with the existing state of things, and Mr. Ricardo's suggestions were the most practical he had heard.

Mr. RICARDO, in replying to the discussion, said that in some degree the title "Ideal City" was for his Paper, a misnomer, for he had been dealing with what were possible reforms in an actual

city—still they were such reforms as would be found in an ideal city. He had, he believed, kept them as low and as moderate as was consistent with practicability; for the problem was not how to treat an imaginary city, but how we could improve this city of ours. The first thing, however, was to obtain some general agreement as to the lines on which the schemes of reform should be advanced.

Mr. CARÖE, who also replied, remarked that the Institute might certainly take into consideration the suggestion of Mr. Fleming. The County Council invited the Institute to give them ideas and suggestions, but they threw them on one side. If it were true, although hard to believe, that there was another society abetting the Council in their unfortunate procedure, he suggested that the Institute should be ready to put its feelings into its pockets, if necessary, and get into communication with the other institution. He did not care how it was done, but they ought to get a good Lambeth Bridge, if they could not get a good one at Vauxhall. He thought the Art Committee might act upon this suggestion, and go to that other institution and endeavour to arrive at some reasonable understanding with it. As had been insisted upon over and over again, all they wanted was to secure good architecture, and not to interfere with the engineering part of the work. There was no doubt that the Art Committee was very much disheartened by the manner in which the London County Council had dealt with their efforts in connection with Vauxhall Bridge, and he was afraid that their inaction of late had been due to the fact that the enormous amount of work which they had done for that important subject had had very little result, although at one time they expected a very great deal. Mr. Fleming referred to the housing of the working classes, and one reason probably that it was not mentioned in the various Papers that were read was that it was such an exceedingly difficult question. He desired to compliment the London County Council upon the new buildings for working classes which were being erected behind the Tate Gallery. They were a credit to London and to everyone connected with them. He hoped that there would be some outcome of this meeting, and that some definite steps would be taken to endeavour to check the swallowing-up of all the natural beauty which surrounded our great cities.

Mr. T. STIRLING LEE, referring to the statement in the Earl of Meath's Paper that they found difficulty in getting fountains for parks in this country, observed that as a sculptor he knew of no such difficulty.

THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC IN ARCHITECTURE.

By REGINALD BLOMFIELD, M.A.Oxon.

THE subject on which I have been invited to address you is one of such intricate difficulty, and so closely connected with wider questions, that any reflections I may offer you are only in the nature of prolegomena. That such a subject should be suggested for discussion at this Congress is significant, for it points to the fact, with which we architects are painfully familiar, that the public does want educating in architecture very badly; and, in saying this, no imputation is made against our individual clients. The mere fact that they come to us shows (at least we think so) very excellent good taste, and though this impression is not always maintained, and occasions have been known to arise in which the architect has had to admit his inability to cope with his client's tenacity as to plate-glass and other matters which vex the souls of the righteous, yet, on the whole, if properly handled, the client will usually follow his architect's lead. I shall, therefore, not attempt to deal with that most tempting subject—the intellectual relation of architect and client. What we are here concerned with is the general standard of intelligence in regard to architecture, the appreciation and misappreciation of the art as shown by current judgments, whether in the press or elsewhere; the evidence of taste displayed in actual buildings which reflect the average opinion of the times. The attitude of the man in the street is the problem with which we have to deal.

Now I fear there can be very little doubt that this attitude is far from satisfactory. I think that any competent observer who took note of the average of architecture in our great cities would be driven to the conclusion that the general level of taste and ability is low; further, he would find that some of the least admirable of these buildings were the most admired; and, lastly, if he compared his observations not only with the criticisms of the press but with individual opinion, he would find no common standard of appreciation, merely a mass of unrelated judgments, amounting to little more than individual expressions of like or dislike. He would, in short, find public opinion on architecture in a state very little removed from chaos. He would find that there is no intelligent body of opinion to which a competent architect can appeal as a matter of course, and that the public in the pursuit of architecture are like sheep without a shepherd. The uncertainty of taste shown in the treatment of public buildings of the last fifty years—shown I do not mean by the architects but by the authorities responsible—is conclusive evidence of the confusion of judgment which exists in the minds of our representative public men. First we had the Houses of Parliament, then the Foreign Office, then again the mediævalism of the Law Courts, and now (I think fortunately) the classic of the new Government buildings. It is evident that the authorities have had no sort of principle to guide them, and so the pendulum swings backwards and forwards. Unhappy officials, burdened with a responsibility of taste beyond their capacity, catch wildly at any passing fashion. Their chief idea seems to be to make a desperate bolt for cover; as for any consecutive tradition of taste, any steady development of ideas on architecture, the case seems as hopeless as ever.

It has been suggested that this state of affairs is inevitable, that it is the penalty we pay for the individualism of English genius; that though the French do in fact possess a traditional standard of taste and technique, they do not reach the excellence attained by Englishmen in isolated instances. There may be some truth in this view; we cannot have a school, and

at the same time genius breaking out in all sorts of different directions at once. That we have no school in this sense is quite certain, for the Academy exists for other purposes; but it is to be doubted whether we nowadays produce genius in sufficient quantity to compensate for this absence of tradition; and at any rate this deficiency has not always been characteristic of English architecture. If, in the last century, Mr. Vardy or Mr. Ware, Mr. Wood of Bath or Mr. Fliteroft were called upon to design a building, they knew exactly what they had to do; they had no necessity to clear the ground by a long preliminary discussion as to the style to be adopted. Given the client's general instructions, everything followed as a matter of course. The workman had all his details at his fingers' ends, and the client would have been much surprised if he did not get a house up to the accepted standard of taste, and as like as two peas to the nine hundred and ninety-nine "seats of the nobility and gentry" then being erected in every part of England. Everything went as smoothly as clockwork. Such a state of affairs has, of course, its defects. It may lead to dulness, pedantry, and stupidity, yet architecture is so difficult an art that it is only by long-continued effort on familiar lines that any excellence may be attained; and without this state of things we should never have reached that complete accomplishment within prescribed limits, that clean precision of workmanship, which is so essentially characteristic of early eighteenth-century work in England.

But about a hundred and fifty years ago a new element appeared. The amateur and the virtuoso assumed an importance they had never previously enjoyed. Distinguished noblemen dabbled in design. Eminent men of letters amused themselves with architecture. In 1750 Horace Walpole writes, "I am going to build a little Gothic castle at Strawberry Hill," ominous announcement of the impending change; and in the next few years Walpole completed his ridiculous house, to the admiration of all his acquaintance. The worst of it was that, though perfectly absurd in his notions of architecture, Walpole was a man of brilliant literary ability and a reasonably good connoisseur. Moreover he thoroughly understood the temper of his class, and the consequence was that his ideas "caught on" and were accepted by a good many foolish people as a necessary part of polite taste. Accordingly—and this was where the mischief came in—they took their place in that Romantic movement in literature which was soon to overrun the whole of civilised Europe. It is rather curious to reflect that the eighteenth century, supposed to be *par excellence* the century of logic and lucidity of thought, should have seen the birth of that confusion of ideas as to the limits and relations of the different arts from which we suffer at the present moment. Joseph Spence, an intimate friend of Walpole, wrote an elaborate treatise to interpret plastic art in terms of poetry, and, though this book was pulverised by Lessing, Spence's fallacy, or rather the temper of mind which admits of it, is extant to this day. Walpole subordinated architecture to the elegant insincerity of his own literature; and the loss of all tradition in taste and standards of judgment was now only a question of time. Literary men had got the control, and it was not for mere architects to dislodge them. Moreover these very architects were too often their humble and obedient servants. Though Chambers, last of the Romans, made a determined stand for the old ways, Robert Adam devoted his extraordinary cleverness to the introduction of a new manner in design; the Dilettante Society had set the ball rolling, according to the latest lights of Stuart and Revett; and now there was this direct attempt being made to reproduce Gothic architecture, in obedience to a purely literary sentiment. It was hardly to be wondered at that the layman should lose his bearings. In the heat and turmoil of all this revivalism he might be pardoned for thinking that taste in architecture was a mere matter of pitch and toss.

Thus this century opened with three styles struggling for ascendancy: the old traditional classic of Chambers and his school; the new Greek method, which was to be carried to such a high degree of excellence by Decimus Burton and later by Thompson of Glasgow; and, lastly,

this revived Gothic. All architects of reputation followed one or other of the first two manners. The amateurs stuck to the Gothic, and the amateurs carried the day; but when one considers that the whole force of the Romantic movement was behind them the result is not surprising. So Wyatt, or Wyattville, or whatever he chose to call himself, started his career of architectural murder. Then Pugin followed, and threw himself into the cause with the enthusiasm of a very ill-regulated mind; and then came Ruskin, a man of narrow prejudice, but brilliant genius, whose eloquence won a sort of St. Martin's summer for the Gothic movement, prolonging its life quite two generations beyond its appointed time. I need not follow further the familiar history of the Gothic movement, but there is one important conclusion which I should venture to draw from this hasty survey, and it is this: All these men, from Horace Walpole to Ruskin, seem to me to have laboured under one very serious vice in their handling of architecture. If I may say so, they took their eye off the ball. Walpole treated architecture as a subordinate expression of literature. Pugin, and still more Ruskin, translated it into terms of ethics. The result has been that the idea of architecture as an art, with its own limits, its own technique, and its own ideals, has been forgotten, and one has almost to say lost. Volumes of eloquence as to the moral beauty of certain forms of architecture not only teach one nothing, but are actually misleading as to their artistic value. For an architect may be a very good man, and design and build with the utmost sincerity and moral enthusiasm, but his work may be exceedingly bad; witness that childish building the Museum at Oxford. And, on the other hand, it is very well known that artists of distinguished ability, whose work has had a singular fascination for intelligent judges, have been, to say the least of it, not immaculate. The critics have, in fact, set up an irrelevant standard; they have concentrated attention on matters which interest them, but which have no more to do with architecture than with boot-blackening; and we stumble here on some of the radical defects of serious English criticism. That strenuousness on which we pride ourselves has the result either of making our critics take their subject as a text for their own rhapsodies, or else it drives them out into action in the form of a directly moral application. They seem incapable of that cool and equable sympathy with every man on his own merits, that patient waiting on the development of genius which gives its extraordinary value to such criticism as that of Sainte-Beuve; for the function of a critic is to explain and interpret, not to substitute his own personality for that of his subject.

We have thus arrived at two results: first, that public opinion on architecture is practically non-existent—that is, its judgments tend to be irrelevant and to rest themselves on side issues; secondly, that this has resulted from the subordination of the art to the amateur, more particularly the literary amateur; and the question now arises how this state of things is to be dealt with.

In the first place it seems to me that a fresh philosophy of art is necessary, or rather a return to that clear understanding of the limits of the various arts on the lines laid down by Lessing one hundred and thirty years ago. We have to recover and drive home the truth that if the arts have some common ground, yet they differ essentially “ὡς καὶ τρόποις μιμήσεως” in their subject-matter and technique, and what Lessing did for poetry, painting, and sculpture we have now to apply to architecture. We architects have to build up in the public mind the conception of architecture as an art, with its own methods of expression and its own problems. We have to make it clear that architecture is not sculpture and painting, but architecture; that, given the practical conditions to be complied with, the architect has to treat them *secundum artem*—that is, that his concern is with proportions, mass, and light and shade. It is easy to sneer at the old jargon, such as the relation of solids to voids, and the like, yet these remain a general description of the actual difficulties in design that our art

has to attack; and our skill should show itself not in the skilful reproduction of other people's buildings, or somebody else's motives, but in this exact adjustment of proportions, in the subtle management of light and shade, of shadows and reflected lights. It is due to the causes which I have endeavoured to indicate above that this conception has been thrust on one side, even by architects themselves. There is, and has been for the last few years, a very favourite watchword among some of us, "Art is one," and under cover of this motto the crafts have manœuvred a skilful and insidious attack on architecture. The architect has been relegated to the position of the useful drudge who blows the organ while the craftsmen play on it. His function has been supposed to be that of providing an occasion for the arts of the sculptor, the painter, the metal-worker, the enameller, and all the others of the noble army of craftsmen. If the architect's architecture gets in the way it must get out of it, even to the destruction of the finest architecture in the kingdom; and in this way the architect is considered to establish his claim to be a member, though indeed but a poor relation, of the family of artists. As to this Shibboleth, of course all art is one, also it is not. It is one in the sense that, to the exercise of any art, some measure of imagination and practical invention is necessary, and again in the sense that any work of art is an expression of the human intelligence. In this sense the saying is true, but it is also a harmless platitude. If we try to get at the facts we find that all art is not one; that, on the contrary, each art has its separate province, divided from its neighbour by neutral ground which either may occasionally invade, or which they may fairly occupy in common; yet their separate limits ought to be strictly maintained in thought, and both in this and in many other instances the crying need is for clear ideas. It is to this groundwork of thought that I think we ought to direct our attention if we hope to educate the public. It is very desirable that the layman should know the history of the architecture of his own and other countries. His ideas will gather shape and colour from actual instances, and it is almost necessary that he should have some acquaintance with acknowledged masterpieces, in order to acquire some practical standard of judgment. Yet it is the use of this standard that constitutes the real difficulty. It is of very little use having a standard, and even a great mass of knowledge, if you have no idea how to apply it; in other words, it is of very little use to supply the public with facts and pattern books until the public mind is prepared to receive them—and it is here that the real difficulty of education begins.

There seem to me, generally speaking, to be three channels through which public opinion can be reached: (1) by direct school teaching; (2) by treatises; (3) by the work of architects themselves. In regard to school teaching a good deal more might, I think, be done in this direction than anyone seems to contemplate at present. In most of our important public schools there is an art museum of sorts, a drawing class, run on rather old-fashioned lines, and usually some intelligent master with a cultivated interest in the antique and a sentimental attachment to Early Italian art. Now, I am not in the least depreciating the work so done. It is good, as far as it goes, and is a very great advance on the neglect of any such teaching habitual thirty years ago. What is wanted is a more complete organisation of this teaching and a more comprehensive scope. Boys, those at any rate with reasonable powers of observation, are quick to pick up impressions, and there can be no doubt that they acquire some valuable elements of culture from the casual information that they are able to gather in this manner; yet I think I am correct in saying that the boys' attention is called to art, not from an artistic, but from a literary standpoint. Our public-school masters are, as a rule, very excellent educationalists; there are probably none better in matters of scholarship and literature, but they regard the arts from the point of view of the British public, rather as an elegant and perhaps superfluous accomplishment than as a serious expression of

thought. Architecture in especial—I may say it in this company—from every point of view the most important of the arts, is hardly ever dealt with in our public schools. A boy gets some slight acquaintance with Greek and Italian sculpture from the casts in his museum, and learns the names at least of the great painters; he may also hear something about churches and buildings from the school antiquarian society, but of architecture never a word. What I think might be possible would be (1) to provide a well-selected set of architectural drawings of well-known buildings, and the simplest possible technical diagrams, such as should be easily intelligible to the schoolboy mind; (2) to give an occasional reading in architecture, dealing with its simplest points, and illustrated by models and clear drawings. The object of any such lecture should, of course, be merely introductory—that is to say, it should not attempt any elaborate disquisition on styles, or even on history, and should carefully avoid any attempt at technical instruction. What is wanted is such a handling of the subject as will call the boy's attention to architecture, and give him an interest which he can develop later if he has any aptitude that way. By this means the ground would be broken up for the more detailed courses of instruction, such as are provided by the Architectural Association, Liverpool and London Universities, King's College, and the like; and even if the study were carried no further it would leave an intelligent interest in the art, and have an educational value of its own. Some sort of architectural text-book for beginners is, in fact, badly wanted; but the necessity for extreme clearness and simplicity of treatment, in addition to a comprehensive grasp of the subject, makes the preparation of such a text-book a matter of very great difficulty; yet it ought to be possible to prepare such a work, and I commend the problem to our professors of architecture. Something has already been attempted in this way in the University Extension Lectures. I have no experience to offer on this subject, but it appears to me that the lecturer labours under two serious disadvantages. In the first place he has to address a mixed audience, mostly of an age at which learning is not so easy as it used to be; and secondly, he has to make his lecture popular and attractive, otherwise his class falls to pieces. Moreover, so far as I understand, every lecturer is free to follow his own devices, with the result that what one man builds up another pulls down. At every point, in fact, in our attempts at education in architecture we are brought up short by this want of a common standard, this loss of all established tradition.

The same difficulty meets us in the attempt to influence opinion by books and treatises. It was easy enough to lay down the law about architecture, when the Five Orders and their strict observance constituted the law and the prophets. In Wren's time there was no necessity to educate the public. Evelyn did all that was wanted when he translated Fréart's *Parallels*. But nowadays we have no law; and if we architects are not agreed among ourselves as to the principles on which we should appreciate each other's work it is inevitable that the public should be hopelessly at sea. Yet I believe that our differences of opinion are more superficial than serious, more the result of misunderstanding than any insuperable cleavage. Whatever our individual divergences of manner, a really fine piece of architecture is usually accepted as such by most of us, and the problem before us is to disentangle the common ground of judgment on which we undoubtedly act, and to define it in such a form as will be intelligible to the public and a guide to them in their own appreciations—a task again of the very greatest difficulty, and perhaps not the work of one generation, or of one man; yet I do not think that such a result will be indefinitely postponed. The consensus of competent judgment gains ground every year, and in time a method of criticism may be deduced from it, something far wider and more penetrating than the time-honoured system of the Orders.

Meanwhile, and at a lower level, something might be done. It has been suggested that a

series of plain pattern books for builders, giving working drawings of quite simple designs for doorways, windows, and the like, would save us from the utter vulgarity of the great majority of modern buildings in this country. It is well known that on the greater number of such buildings no architect has been employed, but the public is not aware of this, and its vision (such as it is) is being constantly perverted by the worst possible models in front of it. This, at least, we might escape, and the builders of the last century did escape it, because they worked to an excellent set of accepted patterns. It would be a most useful and, I think, practicable task if a committee of architects of recognised competence could be formed to superintend the issue of some such series of pattern books. In the matter of building construction this has already been very well done in the South Kensington volumes, and it would not, I think, be difficult to supplement this on the side of design.

Lastly, we come to what is, after all, the most important means of educating the public in architecture, our own work. Not only does an architect have a unique opportunity of educating the individual in his relations with his client, but each fresh work should be the most convincing embodiment of his own ideas of architecture, of which the effect, like that of a stone cast into the water, must spread in ever-widening circles far outside the centre of its first attack. We must set our own house in order before we can sweep and garnish that of the public; and thus the education of the public passes into the more intimate question of the education of ourselves; and at this point I may fairly leave it.

Perhaps at this moment the two worst faults of our architecture are, first, the total absence of any sense of style, that kind of design which snatches up any sort of detail and tacks it on to any kind of building, and of which there is abundant illustration in most of our new streets. This method we are all agreed on condemning; but there is another and rarer fault, and the more dangerous because it is the vice of a virtue, and this is a certain preciosity, what Pliny calls *quedam artis libido*, which runs out into frantic experiments after something new and altogether original. This latter habit of mind turns its back on tradition, or thinks it does, and resolutely eschews beauty, in its wild attempt at strength. Both of these faults can only be attacked by a more thorough and intelligent education of the student, and by a clearer appreciation in our own minds of the province and ideal of architecture.

In the first sentence of this Paper I mentioned the extreme difficulty of this subject, and I have endeavoured to show that the state of public taste at present is due to deeply-seated causes, causes so difficult to reach that one might almost be tempted to despair of the future of architecture. Our best ground of hope is in the excellent work being done by individual architects, and in the agreement, rather than disagreement, of critical judgment which exists among ourselves. Such an agreement must, in the long run, influence public opinion. What we experts say in this generation will be matter of common knowledge and acceptance in the next. It should be our work, therefore, to clear the air of misconceptions, and to endeavour to build up again an æsthetic judgment, which shall be independent of styles and fashions, because it rests on the essential facts and conditions which lie at the root of all good work in architecture. We cannot ourselves expect much immediate result, yet perhaps our children's children may enter into possession of the promised land.

DISCUSSION.

Mr. J. M. BRYDON, *Vice-President R.I.B.A.*, in the Chair.

Professor SIMPSON, of Liverpool, said that the interesting Paper which Mr. Blomfield had read covered the ground so completely that little remained to be said. The few remarks he had to make would be confined entirely to the cul-

minating point of Mr. Blomfield's Paper, at which he said that architects might leave the subject. In his (the speaker's) opinion the education of the public in architecture depended entirely upon the education of the architect. It was on the

architecture of the day, the work which was being produced at the present time, and not on the work which has been produced in the past, that the education of the public in this matter must entirely depend. It was a well-known truism in education that the first thing was to interest people in order to educate them. It was quite true that people could to a certain extent be interested in architecture in the way Mr. Blomfield had suggested—in classes at school, in University Extension lectures, &c. But the interest aroused by such means was very likely to evaporate, or, if carried too far, would result in the raising of an absolutely false standard as to what constituted architecture, because that standard would be simply and purely an archaeological one. Consequently he fell back on the line that the only way to educate the public was by interesting them, and the only way to attain a sustained interest was by the works of architecture around them, *i.e.* by the works which contributed to their comfort and convenience. It was, therefore, practically by the works of architects themselves that the public must be educated, and he was certain that his hearers would agree with him when he said that the architects must always lead, and the public always follow. They saw the bad effects of the opposite at the beginning of the century, when, at the time of the revivals, a part of the general public was educated in architectural matters in advance of the mass of practising architects. Exactly the same thing had happened within the last quarter of a century in what was commonly called the minor arts. Twenty-five years ago the revived interest in these arts led to rather curious results when the public began to take an interest in them. It was quite true that artists had emancipated themselves since, but the result at first had been to create a craving for the antique and to foster and encourage the art of lying in dealers in old furniture. The standard of the amateur, as a rule, was entirely a retrospective one. The general public went away, saw, admired, returned and desired to copy. But with the artist it was quite different; when he went away he saw and admired, but his one idea on his return was not to copy, but to advance. Therefore, if the public were educated to such an extent that they dictated the standard, the architect's standard of advancement would not have much chance. The remark that the demand created the supply did not follow in architecture: we could not have good work merely by crying for it. It was sometimes, in order to enforce an argument, a good thing to suggest an impossibility, and there were two impossibilities he would put before them. Let us suppose we had a public educated so as to appreciate the most beautiful work of architecture, and a race of architects quite incapable of producing that work: where would our architecture be then? Secondly, suppose we

had a public willing to be led, and a race of architects to whom bad work was an impossibility. What did the disapproval of the general public matter in that case? All work would be good, whether they approved or not. It might be said that we should never see the time when all work would be good; and though that might be true it must always be borne in mind that there had been such times in the past, and there was no particular reason why they should not occur again. The advance in architecture during the last twenty-five years showed that this was not such an impossibility as at first might appear. Architects received encouragement from the public, and the public demanded something different from the commonplace. That their taste was not always good was probably not their fault alone. All who lived in large cities knew the kind of work by which people were surrounded—the kind of work which educated the public. But if buildings improved at the rate they had done during the last twenty-five years, there would be no need to read Papers on the education of the public, for that would follow as a matter of course. All, therefore, we had to do was, as Mr. Blomfield said, to put our house in order, to educate ourselves so that we could educate others, and not to be deterred by the fact that although we might sow it would be others who would reap.

Mr. BASIL CHAMPNEYS said he was one of those who took rather a gloomy view of the prospect of architecture at the present time, and he believed the evil was even more deeply seated than many might expect. He differed from the last speaker; for, however good our architecture, he could not see how it was to flourish without popular appreciation, or how there was to be a market for it if people did not choose to go to the market. There was no question that the other arts had suffered from this want of appreciation almost as much as architecture. Painting, until some few years ago, was exceedingly flourishing; but his belief was that the demand for it was in a great measure fictitious, and largely founded on financial speculation in the purchase of pictures. When this was exploded, popular love for it was shown to be practically non-existent by the great diminution of purchasers. Sculpture had comparatively little scope; popular judgment thought it a necessary completion to certain public buildings, but otherwise showed little love for it as a mere art. Still, with both these arts, there was a certain fashion of appreciation, and a more or less organised body of criticism—of whatever value it might be. But with regard to architecture this was altogether lacking, and there was no criticism which was in touch with the general public. The architectural room at the Royal Academy was considered by the ordinary visitor as a kind of accessible home for the concentration of such illustrations as appeared more sporadically in the auctioneers' windows;

every man was a law to himself in such matters, and the architectural critic, as regards popular influence, could scarcely be said to exist. If this were the case, we seemed to be altogether dependent on a public taste which neither was adequate nor wished to be improved, and for the education of which no systematic method existed; and it was important to know what was the standard of natural taste on which the architect depended for appreciation. He feared that this consideration did not lead to much encouragement. They themselves knew fairly well in what architectural art consisted, and this was exactly what the general public entirely failed to recognise. He would give a few instances. He had been accustomed to look with pleasure on a house which he often passed. Though it was in a style for which he had no special affinity, it was the work of an artist, marked by reticence and severe restraint. The other day he saw not far from it a definite attempt to reproduce it without the aid of an architect. The imitation, though close, resulted in the grotesque; it was a hopelessly stupid parody. He had no doubt, however, that it satisfied the owner, who probably congratulated himself on achieving a satisfactory result without having to pay an architect's fees. The same process, of which this was a salient instance, was to be seen almost everywhere. One had got almost to dread any new departure on the part of an original architect because of the certainty that it would shortly be vulgarised and brought into contempt by some stupid and grotesque imitation. The evil was widespread, and, so far as he could judge from results, the faculty of recognising artistic handling in architecture was yearly on the decrease. The speculator was rapidly gaining ground. Every year saw a larger proportion of buildings erected to which no one who by the utmost expansion of the term could be called an "architect" had had anything to say. A short time ago he happened to be walking with an architect friend in a district a few miles from London which had lately greatly increased. They determined, for amusement, to notice the many rather large houses they passed, and to see how many could be attributed to any sort of architect. In a walk of about a mile and a half they saw one, and that they found had been built by an architect for himself. But probably many of the owners of these houses were so-called men of taste; many of the interiors were no doubt decorated with "artistic" wall-papers, and doubtless the style had been in many cases made a point of by the building-owner. It was only the artistic touch, the essential of architecture, which was independent of and above all questions of style, to which all had been equally blind. But he was not sure that the absence of the regular so-called architect had always, or under all conditions, been a calamity to art. Many of the—to him—best

buildings of past times had been built by those who could not call themselves architects at all. For instance, Professor J. W. Clarke had shown that the very fine river front of Clare College, Cambridge, was built by the Cambridge builder of that date. But how different were the conditions under which such people worked from those of the moderns! We had only to study the handbooks with which the workmen of former days were equipped to see how carefully they must have trained themselves in all the details. It did not seem to matter much whether the designer were called "architect" or "builder" so long as he possessed the necessary knowledge and skill; but the contemporary speculative builder was equally deficient in both. A client of his once started building a house which he had had designed by a local builder; but he got nervous about it when he saw the plans, and got him (the speaker) to see the designs; he declined to interfere with the exterior, though he got the builder to alter the plans so as to make the rooms livable. The result was what might have been expected: his friend did not realise that the builders of past days had a great deal more knowledge than some of the so-called architects of these days. He had put before them a rather pessimistic or discouraging view of the present, and he had not much to say that was encouraging as to the future. He very much doubted, even if the work of architects were raised to a uniform standard, whether that would do much good if the public did not want good architecture, and if people were content with the speculative builder. Some good might be done by some of the methods which Mr. Blomfield proposed, though he did not look with favour on what he said about pattern-books of windows and doors, for he was afraid that the speculative builder, with the encouragement of the client, would put the wrong windows to the right doors. He believed there was plenty of architectural talent abroad which would do what was wanted, and abolish the speculative builder, if only the public rose to the occasion. Were they likely to do that? It seemed to him that a flank movement in architectural strategy was necessary. Mr. Blomfield's *History of the Renaissance* was precisely the sort of thing for this purpose—a work of a high literary standard which many people of literary attainments had read as a book, even when they had no particular interest in the art. In addressing public bodies he had tried to interest them in architecture quite indirectly. If he had given out that he would address them definitely on architecture, they would not have attended. He also thought it well to attract people by showing a knowledge of the practical superior to that attainable by the speculator, for the public could understand points of that kind, though they could not understand points of art. Better times for art might possibly be

inaugurated as a consequence of the war and of the recent national crisis, or of any other crisis we might have to go through.

Mr. E. S. PRIORS said that this difficult subject was clearly an attractive one for architects, since the public need for education had come up at all the sittings of the Congress. Now it had its own sitting, and Mr. Blomfield had laid down an excellent plan of campaign, with all the strategy and tactics of the matter. The youth of England were to be dealt with; but why not the ladies, who merited special campaigning? Still, with Mr. Blomfield's science, the army might advance from the raw recruit just learning to handle his T-square, to the veteran assessor of national competitions, all banded together with the imperial idea, and carry forward the flag of the architect's profession till it waved over the Ideal City so ably depicted the previous evening, in which the architect was the all in everything. The only difficulty was the public, who were so ready to be conquered, yet turned up in the rear again as uneducated as ever. He admired the agility with which Mr. Blomfield had skirted the fact that this education of the public was a very old matter. It was with no disrespect that he thought of architects as the Sophists who educated the public so long and so uselessly; but he might observe that those professors of wisdom had never been agreed as to what wisdom was, but only that it was necessary to educate the public therein. Mr. Blomfield also had not noticed that when literary amateurship, to which he attributed so much disaster, came into being, that was the moment when the education of the public was begun by the architects. Were not both similar symptoms of decadence? The revivalists—Greek, Gothic, Queen Anne—all had done their best, and still the public were not educated. Now it was proposed to attack them with "mass and proportion, light and shade, and the limits of the arts." He would be excused for saying that the public might look forward to this new education with equanimity, not to say amusement. The Public said to architects, as Homer's gods said to men, "Why do you blame us, when all the while it is you yourselves heap up your ills?" Why this long education had not brought architecture, was because architects had not got architecture to give. Except for this, Mr. Blomfield's programme was an excellent one. As the Greek revival produced Cockerell; the Gothic, Butterfield; the Queen Anne, Norman Shaw; so also "mass" &c. might give us notable architects; but architecture—that would begin only when the public built without "architects."

Mr. PAUL WATERHOUSE, M.A. [F.], in moving a vote of thanks, said that the Paper had opened up an extremely interesting subject—one which they all thought about at times. Of course, everyone realised that the conditions of the present day as regards architecture were vastly different from

those of the past, but he could not feel that the ignorance of the public was at the bottom of these changed conditions. In the first place, they were due largely to the great multiplicity of our buildings, and to the fact that so many of them were built by persons who were not architects at all, or architects in name only. But had the public ever been seriously interested in architecture? He doubted whether there was any evidence to prove that in the great architectural ages of the past the public had shown a learned interest in the subject. If one looked back to Greece, he believed that one might search the literature of the Periclean age without discovering anything that might be called an intelligent lay appreciation of architecture; and as for Rome, the passages in Latin literature which could prove that the writers had anything more than the most superficial knowledge of the subject might be put together on half a page. Pliny the Elder, who was so often quoted by writers on Roman art, introduced, to be sure, a few art criticisms into his *Natural History* under the heading of "Stone," but did not appear to have a technical knowledge of architecture at all. If it had always been so with the public, he did not think that the outlook was necessarily bad because the public knew so little of architecture now. There was a worse thing than ignorance, viz. the nescience of ignorance. Might he be permitted to make an analogy? It was dangerous to compare an art with a science, but one might compare, for a moment, architecture with medicine. Architecture, it might be said, was an art which dealt with common needs with which everyone was concerned; therefore the public could not afford to be ignorant of architecture. That was exactly the case with medicine also—the body was, at all events, as intimate to human beings as the house they lived in, and it might be expected that ordinary folk should know about medicine. Happily, they did not, and they consequently went to the doctor. But architecture in the eyes of the public was such a simple kind of thing that a good many people imagined they knew all about it. The man who would not think of doing without his doctor frequently thought of doing without his architect; and if one could pursue the analogy farther, it would be to express a Quixotic hope that architects might do in their own sphere what was done by doctors in hospitals, and should conduct architectural dispensaries, in which men who did not employ architects should be architecturally treated gratis. Architects would not gain financially, but the country would gain in art. He thought that they should leave the public alone in this matter, though it was certainly permissible to say a few words in criticism of that invulnerable body. We could all say what we liked about the public, because every individual of the public knew he at least was not being per-

sonally alluded to under this title. He feared that architecture was rather a big subject for the public to be educated in, though he did not wish that architects should stand in the way of any members of the public should they wish to know all about it. It always seemed to him, however, that one was learning something about architecture every day; and the more one learnt about architecture, the more one felt one's ignorance about it. It would be easy to teach the public the outlines—the surface, so to speak—of architecture, but that deeper knowledge which could give them the critical faculty could not be imparted without a very great deal of study. There were a few architectural laymen who had that thorough knowledge, but one could not speak of them as “the public.” As Mr. Blomfield had hinted, architects had really their own house to set in order; there must be no ignorance amongst architects, and it was to ensure this that there were to-day architectural schools and examinations. There were, he knew, many architects who were enemies to examination, and all were agreed that we could not make an architect by examination. But the friends of examination did not regard it as the winged sandals of Mercury, or as a sort of architectural Pegasus, but rather as a prosaic means of making sure that no ignorance was let into the profession. It was the general education of architects that was wanted to command respect, and not a mere knowledge of technicalities. The examinations had a certain positive function in the encouragement and direction of study, but the examination standard should be given rather a negative than a positive value. It set a measure below which we would not let our members sink, not a goal which was to be looked on as the culmination of their studies.

Mr. JOHN SLATER, B.A.Lond. [F.], in seconding the vote of thanks, said that one suggestion brought forward by Mr. Blomfield was an exceedingly useful one. As Mr. Waterhouse had said, one could not expect the public to have a great technical knowledge of architecture, but at any rate they could be taught to take an interest in it; and the remark he was struck with was that about giving schoolboys some slight acquaintance with architecture. Everyone who had seen the schools of average schoolboys—he did not mean Board schools, but the big schools—must have been struck by the intense dulness and ugliness of a great many of the rooms in which the boys worked. That seemed to be a thing which could be easily altered; and if the class-rooms in which our boys and girls were taught history could be embellished by good photographs or drawings of our cathedrals and other prominent historical buildings, the scholars would then, at a very early stage, begin to realise a little of what was such an important thing, viz. the close connection between the

buildings of a country and its history. Mr. Blomfield had alluded to the Cambridge and London University Extension lectures on Architecture. He (the speaker) had more than once been asked to set an examination paper and examine the students' papers in connection with those lectures, and he was bound to say that the syllabuses of the lectures in many cases appeared to be very different from what they might be, with one exception, viz. the syllabus provided by Mr. Arnold Mitchell. That was a most admirable syllabus, illustrated by delightful sketches which could not fail to interest all. The students' papers he had looked through had convinced him that even such a slight knowledge of architecture must be a very great interest and use to the people who had gained it. They might go on a journey, and would be able to take more interest in the buildings they saw than they would have done had they known nothing about architecture. As to the effect of such education on modern architecture, he did not think it would be much; and as to that, it was architects, and architects only, who must think of education and inspiration, and, as Mr. Waterhouse had said, go on learning every day of their lives.

Mr. BERESFORD PITE [F.] said they ran a great risk of forgetting an all-important truth—“A little learning is a dangerous thing”—and the education of the public, unless it were an education as complete as the education of the architect, would possibly do the architect more harm than good. The only education of the public that could be of any good to the architect was an education that placed the public above the level of the architect, so that the client, instead of dictating ignorantly, improperly, and unwisely to the architect, should direct him with wisdom and sagacity to achieve something which otherwise the poor architect would not have been able to do. He was very much afraid that that ideal must be left, with Mr. Milner's delightful ideal city which they had heard about the previous night, to the dim and distant future. But to be practical and not to be pessimistic, did the education of the public in architecture matter to them at all? The education of the public in building construction was something obviously for the benefit of the community. The public needed scarcely any incentive to get educated as to their domestic requirements, the arrangement of their warehouses and commercial buildings, while the architect often had to suffer dictation from all sorts of ecclesiastics in regard to the erection of places of worship. The point Mr. Blomfield in his eloquent and interesting Paper insisted on was the education of the public in the artistic side of architecture, and he (the speaker) suggested that that was altogether a banality. Architects did not wish nor want it, and the public were better left in whatever delightful simplicity as to architecture they might be in, while architects should

pursue their studies with all the enthusiasm they could. The art of ladies' dress, of military uniforms, and to a certain extent the heraldic elements, were living arts amongst us, and free from the artificial influences of revivalism; whereas the art of architecture was an artificial one. Let them leave the public to cultivate those simplicities that delighted them, and leave the architect to the superior wisdom which he could not afford to do without in these indifferent times. It seemed to him that there was a very important fact in Mr. Blomfield's review of the circumstances which had led to the present situation, which must not be overlooked. Mr. Blomfield started with Walpole's little Strawberry Hill villa. Of course, that was followed by Beckford's atrocity at Font-hill, and James Wyatt's ubiquity in all the styles. But parallel with this apparition of the taste—for it was only taste, a Chinese taste which one saw in Kew Gardens, an affectation of the grotesque—was a deep and enthusiastic artistic appreciation of Greek work derived from a sane and healthful study, which none could deprecate, of the remains of Greek work. Stuart and Revett were the pioneers, and the movement culminated in the work of Cockerell. Then we were brought face to face with that flaming portent Burges, whom no one could accuse of artificiality; he was a burning enthusiast animated with the idea that Gothic was the only art, and one which he practised as an artist. The rival enthusiasts were the Classic enthusiasts, who saw in Italian Classic the necessary perfection of domestic buildings, and the friction between the two schools was sincere and unartificial. Could we afford to do without that flame of enthusiasm which was cultivated and based upon the study of ancient architecture? We had left meddling with the ashes, and were practically throwing cold water on our enthusiasms; and now we were going to educate the public! Until we could set our house in order, and establish a canon which would again raise our enthusiasm and re-create the interest which had gone, we should be helpless and powerless to appeal to the public. What was needed was intelligent criticism of architecture—a school of criticism. What was wanted was guidance in the matter, and of that there was very little indeed. It seemed to him that there was ample scope in surveying the work of the last century for very careful critical work. We could look down on Ruskin, and talk of the summer of his Gothic enthusiasm, which was unduly prolonged. We were already hungering after the Greek afflatus, and there were signs that it would again exercise an influence on our public buildings; but we must not plunge into mere revivalism. Let them examine a building as a building, apart from its relation to past styles. Mr. Blomfield's mention of the proper appreciation of void to solid, of the play of light and shade, the value of outline

and mouldings, the concentration of ornament and the appreciation of colour quite apart from any detailed examination of style, were all subjects in which architects even were not trained, and in which they might very well train themselves. What was wanted was eclectic classes, not for the purpose of reproducing, in a horrible mixture, all architectural history in picture-books, but in order to gather the value of form apart from mere antiquarianism. The real public that they might with advantage educate was not the public from which architects derived clients, or the public which favoured them with criticism in the daily press; it was the jerry-building public. And if free classes for the education of the jerry-builder in architecture, with a supply gratis of designs for street houses, could be started, we should be doing a great deal. Jerry loved ornament, but he had sense enough to see that a building was cheaper without ornament than with it. But the cheaper architecture or anything else was, the more it was ornamented—the plainer articles of everyday use were the more expensive. That ought not to be so; and if they could get hold of Jerry, and explain to him that plain tiles were better than ornamental ones, he thought that good would be done to the community at large. He was rather afraid of the pattern-book, for people were not the simple children they once were, and they learnt from the pattern-book without being better for doing so; and he was afraid that to the jerry-builders it would certainly do more harm than good.

Mr. E. W. HUDSON [A.] said that it was necessary first for architects to agree upon what the public should be taught as being true taste in architecture, and then at some distant date it might see that it got it. He was, however, inclined to agree with Mr. Pite that in educating the public they might be creating a kind of Frankenstein's monster, with disastrous consequences to themselves if they were unable to control or incompetent to satisfy it. There was with English people a general indifference, which had to be replaced by an intelligent interest. The public must be willing to receive instruction. According to Viollet-le-Duc it was otherwise with his countrymen. "Si le goût tient encore une place en France, c'est principalement au public que nous devons cet avantage." In England the greatest danger lay with the rich amateur who thought he was a born architect and played havoc with the treasured work of bygone ages in spite of every protest. On the other hand much good could be done by an amateur like the late Mr. Beresford Hope. In the abstract the consensus of opinion to-day was this: that it is desirable to produce in architecture an expression of the wants of the period in which we live; but great difference existed as to what style or what adaptation of it was best suited for that purpose, or

whether something new must be created. With many teachers, representing no defined school, things must remain as now, with desultory dogma by units of many notions. He felt that architects influenced the public very little by their works; and in some cases it was as well that it was so. There was so much struggling after a pseudo-picturesqueness—a preponderance of very late Gothic, emasculated, if he might say so, and tending towards the Churrigueresque. In the time of the Gothic revival art tenets were enunciated with no uncertain sound, and ecclesiastical designs based on the best period of mediæval construction were general, produced so accurately that they might have deceived the old master masons who wrought in the original types. In domestic work the same result was sometimes produced, with perhaps less reconciliation of conscience as to its adaptability to modern life and its needs, much as such examples as Cardiff Castle, Eaton Hall, and the late William Burges's house might have been admired; and now "the whirligig of time brings his revenges." The ecclesiastical type referred to is fast going; the domestic type is gone. They were Sir William Richmond's "revitalised corpses"; but their vitality was undeniably vigorous, their physique splendid, but dying, necessarily, in an uncongenial atmosphere. The "art furniture" dealer and the decorator had some influence, as architects found to their regret when not consulted as to these matters. Then there was the "arts and crafts" movement, the effect of which must be considered as infusing individuality in detail. In this commercial age the requirements were such as brought the architect face to face with disagreeable problems, such as the support of a heavy structure upon steel posts, but apparently bearing upon a huge sheet of plate glass, as mentioned in a previous discussion. Pernicious influence is now threatened by importation of American framed "steel and skin" construction, against which we may have to contend very shortly. American capital and enterprise will be giving us repetitions of Queen Anne's Mansions—or thirteen stories of rusticated casing, with the five Orders and a cornice superimposed—to cope with demand for floor space where land is so valuable. One had pleasure in noting, in contrast, that the bijou building next Temple Gardens for Mr. Astor was created at the behest of an American. He feared the evil he predicted was not altogether chimerical. A school of criticism was *prima facie* a good suggestion; but the master critic would be likely to impress his own predilections upon students and inquirers, whereby the spontaneity of an embryo genius might be repressed. Was it not whispered, if not a matter of wide belief, that South Kensington training crushed individuality in art by means of system? Someone had said, "The most ingenious way of becoming foolish

is by system." But he agreed with the suggestion for including the rudiments of architecture in the ordinary school training of boys and girls. Was architecture in such a transition state just now that we needed to set our own house in order? What said the *Athenæum* of the exhibits at Burlington House this year? "Copies of old types—mechanical adjustments—revolt against culture—clumsiness regarded as a charm—not even adapted to the purposes they are intended for—fashion and whim of their clients consulted by architects—clumsy version of low Dutch building, with occasional excursions into half-timbered architecture, or into the Adams style." This at least showed how others saw us. He had heard equally strong criticism from architects of each other's work. He wished he could think with Professor Simpson that interest would grow as our architecture improved; but the return of simplicity and dignity in design was something every practitioner could in the meantime strive after, remembering that "le goût n'est que l'empreinte laissée par une éducation bien dirigée, le couronnement d'un labeur patient, le reflet du milieu dans lequel on vit." Able teacher and willing learner, however, were essentials to success in fostering architectural taste.

Mr. H. G. IBBERSON [A.] said he had great sympathy with Mr. Pite's remarks, especially when he deprecated too great a knowledge of the public in architecture, for he had suffered during the course of a short life a great deal in that respect. There were three stages in the relation of the public feelings to art. In the first, the public knew nothing, and cared nothing; in the second, the public thought it knew, but did not; and the third stage (which they might one day arrive at) was one in which the public had an intelligent knowledge and interest in the subject. He was inclined to think that we were in the middle stage, in which the public had no definite ideas at all, and was prepared to accept almost anything. He recently had had some decoration to do to a Non-conformist chapel under a very pleasant but quite inartistic building committee. He told them as little as possible, and then, instead of indulging in the familiar glitter of pitchpine and varnish, he treated the wood with dull stain, hung tapestry on the east wall, and generally did things entirely opposite to the preconceived notions of Nonconformists. Much to his surprise, the work was liked by his clients! The suggestion was made that a pattern-book should be issued for the use of builders; and the criticism that the right door and the wrong window might get mixed up seemed apt. Something could, however, be done, he thought, in the way of improving the sections of stock mouldings issued by timber merchants. Mr. Blomfield was not quite kind in his reference to Ruskin, and his views as to morals and art. He (the speaker) did not mean to say that shown

art was moral, and that a concealed girder was a vicious thing; but he thought that a people's morals influenced its art. While the public desired the most show for the least money, while a workman under trades unionism did as little work as he could and took no pride in it, though isolated buildings of beauty might be erected, architecture would be an exotic and not a natural growth. He believed that Ruskin's writing had done much for architecture, and he should like to add a humble tribute to the greatness of the man and the greatness of his influence.

Mr. BLOMFIELD, in the course of a brief reply, said the odd thing was that he agreed with most of what his critics had said, but he must correct one or two inaccuracies. He had certainly not suggested, as Mr. Prior seemed to think he had, that the public should be taught the technicalities of proportion, mass, voids and solids, and so on. It would be useless to do anything of the kind; and what he had said was that architects should study these matters. At present most of them, and especially the younger men, appeared to ignore them. Another point raised by Mr. Prior was whether an architect was an architect or not; for that was what it came to. Mr. Prior said we should not get architecture until we got buildings designed by men who were not architects. The meaning of this he could not grasp. He could not seize the precise point at which a man ceased to be a builder and became an architect. In any case, the point seemed to him immaterial, and to be merely playing with words. As to pattern-books, the suggestion was not his own, but was in fact first made by Mr. Lethaby some years ago. Whether the suggestion was practicable or not it

was difficult to say, and no one had even suggested that architecture would be obtained by this means. All that could be arrived at was a certain irreducible minimum of expression, and a means of escaping the prevailing vulgarity of builders' ornament. Some of the speakers had assumed that what he had been driving at had been the reintroduction of strict Classic. Strict Classic, in the sense assumed by the speakers, was just as poisonous as strict Gothic, for in both cases the assumption was that it was to be an exact revival of a past style. What was wanted was to get people to conceive of architecture apart from styles, and not to identify it necessarily with any given style at all, whatever their personal preferences might be; and those qualities to which he wished architects would address themselves were involved in all good architecture, no matter what the style. As to the public, it seemed to be generally admitted that from this point of view the public was hopeless, and this was what he thought himself; and in writing his Paper (the subject of which, he might explain, had been supplied him, and was not his own choice) he had merely suggested what he thought might be the best method of dealing with the public, but he was not in the least sanguine that anything could be done, and his own idea was that architects should give up worrying about the public in this matter. They should satisfy their own artistic standard, and when they had done that the public would probably be satisfied—if not immediately, yet in due course. The whole gist of his Paper was that architects had to deal with themselves if they hoped to educate the public.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN RESPECT OF BUILDING BY-LAWS.

By LACY W. RIDGE [F.]

IT may be present to the minds of those who are members of the Royal Institute of British Architects that on the 12th June 1899 that body passed unanimously a Report drawn up by a Special Committee on Building By-laws in the non-Metropolitan districts of England and Wales.

Among the suggestions of the Report was one that the Local Government Board should be requested to receive a deputation on the subject of these by-laws. On the 26th October last a deputation which had to be hastily got together, and was consequently not as fully representative as might have been desired, waited at Whitehall on Mr. T. W. Russell, M.P., the Parliamentary Secretary of the Local Government Board. Several of the permanent officials of the Board were present. The immediate result I may describe to you in the Report sent to the Council of the Institute and published in the Journal on 11th November 1899.

The Deputation, referring to the Report addressed to the Local Government Board by the Institute, laid before Mr. Russell the views of the Institute on the advisability of grouping the Model By-laws for non-Metropolitan districts in England and Wales, with the view to the adoption of such groups, and such only, as were applicable in particular localities; and the exemption from certain groups of by-laws of detached buildings standing within their own grounds; the uncertain requirements of local authorities as to the drawings required to be deposited, and their declining in some cases to give the grounds of their objections where approval of plans is refused; the establishment of a special technical Tribunal of Appeal; the extension to the provinces of the London system of dealing with rights as to party-walls, and other questions connected with the administration of building by-laws.

Mr. Russell, in reply, said that, as regards the principle underlying the Report, *i.e.* the advising by the Local Government Board of the local authorities as to what by-laws it would be best for them to adopt, it was always a delicate matter, owing to the jealousy of local authorities at the interference of a central authority. He thought the question of grouping the by-laws was a fair point for consideration. As regards the demand on the part of local authorities for drawings, such bodies often exceeded their rights; but in some instances powers were given to local authorities by special Acts. At the stage reached by the present Parliament, he could hold out no hope of legislation on the questions involved, but everything had been carefully noted, and should be submitted to the consideration of the expert advisers of the Board, who would report as to the extent it would be possible without legislation to meet the views of the Royal Institute. In conclusion, Mr. Russell asked whether it would be possible to confer with the Deputation again. An answer having been given in the affirmative, the Deputation thanked Mr. Russell for his courteous hearing, and withdrew.

If the exigencies of an aged Parliament rendered legislation impossible in October the crisis through which the country has since passed has filled not merely Parliamentary officials but the general public with anxieties and considerations of such tremendous moment that the lesser evils which local legislation or administration can cause or cure have sunk into insignificance. It would, in the months that are past, have been useless to attempt either through the newspaper press, with their well-filled columns of startling and too often sad news, or through any other channel to arouse public opinion on such a subject as Building By-laws.

So far as legislation is concerned, we must be content to wait in readiness to impress on

a new Parliament the propriety of considering Bills for the extension to the whole country of the Metropolitan system respecting party-walls; for some proper and equitable system of dealing with "ancient lights," and for such modifications as may be desirable in the Acts affecting buildings in non-Metropolitan districts. Primarily, however, the Report of the Special Committee was intended to deal with the by-laws under existing Acts of Parliament as a matter of administration only. Whether anything has resulted from the consideration of the expert advisers of the Board promised by Mr. Russell I am not in a position to say. It is not inconceivable that at such a time the blessings of peace may have special charms for those who are so comfortably described as "Permanent Officials," and that things are going on much as before; and that vast tracts of open, sparsely inhabited country are still being annexed to an ambitious little town somewhere in the neighbourhood, and the liberty of the inhabitants subjected to "Urban Powers."

Unfavourable, however, as the circumstances are for vigorous action, I felt that I should be almost "looking back" after "putting my hand to the plough" if I allowed a Conference of Architects to be gathered from all parts of the country here in London without at least offering to bring forward again this subject of Building By-laws, on which we have still so much work before us. The particular part of the Report of the Select Committee to which I wish to call attention is its last paragraph. "The influence of those who are interested in building would have to be brought to bear upon the local authorities to urge them to give effect to the proposed measures of relief by adopting such, and such only, of the divisions of the by-laws as would be applicable to their district or to different portions thereof."

Gathered in this Conference must be many who have great personal influence with the members and officials connected with local authorities, while nearly all must from time to time have dealings with them. Architects collectively and working together (why do not architects work better together?) should have an almost decisive voice in these matters. Any other profession would be recognised as the authority on any subject bearing so directly on its work as these by-laws do on our work, and would be allowed to suggest for enactment pretty much what it thought fit. Under the Public Health Act it is the local authority that makes the by-laws, and it has power to alter or repeal them by a subsequent by-law. It is merely provided that they shall not take effect till confirmed by the Local Government Board.

Now it is necessary that the true position of the local authorities should be understood in this matter. Possibly the more important corporations may know their own power, but the constant excuse for harmful by-laws given by members of the smaller bodies I find to be, that the by-laws are thrust on them by the Local Government Board. Mr. Russell, on the other hand, speaks of the jealousy of the local authorities at the interference of a central authority. The explanation of the difference is, I think, that the smaller authorities and their advisers are quite without the knowledge and experience which would make them capable of struggling against the centralised Board at Whitehall, and so take whole what is sent to them. Herein architects as a body might very effectively help these authorities, and I propose to call attention to three special points taken out of the Institute Report as being of particular importance.

The first point on which architects ought to insist is that there should be definite and explicit regulations as to the deposit of drawings. This appears in the body of the Special Committee's Report, page 450 of the 1899 volume of the R.I.B.A. JOURNAL. The principle is that a block plan, with drainage, public roadways, and adjoining premises, should be deposited and left with the local authorities, and that other drawings should be submitted for inspection, stamped, and returned.

It is of great importance that the requirements of the local authorities as to the deposit of drawings should be reasonable, and that they should be explicitly stated. The Committee suggest that in all cases a block plan, with the lines and depths of drainage shown thereon, together with the nearest public roadway and adjoining premises within 100 feet of the proposed building, should be deposited, and that, where required, plans and sections (together with elevations, if needful to explain methods of construction) should be submitted for inspection during a defined and limited time; which drawings should be then returned, stamped, if approved, or, if not approved, accompanied by a precise statement of the particulars in which the by-laws have not been complied with.

It seems to be a sort of tradition at Whitehall that the by-laws cannot go beyond saying that the plans and sections are to be deposited—a wonderful emanation, I suppose, from the legal mind. Mr. Russell, however, said he could see no objection to the By-laws making regulations as to the mode of deposit; and no wonder, for what the Act says is, “And they may further provide for the observance of such by-laws by enacting therein such provisions as they think necessary—as to the giving of notices, as to the deposit of plans and sections by persons intending to lay out streets or to construct buildings.” Note the absence of elevations. “Provisions as to the deposit of plans,” &c., is surely wide enough for a reasonable and definite arrangement. It is extremely objectionable that unnecessary drawings should choke up the offices of the Local Boards, and that architects should be called on to leave there in perpetuity plans of their works, to be studied at their leisure by the local surveyor—possibly a rival practitioner—and by his clerks. If for the public good persons about to build must make and deposit plans, they should at least be informed definitely what they have to do, and be put to as little trouble and, above all, subjected to as little delay as possible.

Next I would urge on you to get the local authorities to push the adoption of the Institute's by-law on party-walls (Division D, *ib.* p. 451). It is long to read through, and might not be wholly intelligible at once. It gives relief, however, in the case of small houses in two particulars which will be much valued by investing builders; it settles the point up to which the party-wall need not be carried through the roof, so that in exposed situations (as along the south coast), where the difficulty of keeping out the weather is considerable, and the risk of fire very slight, the roof over a row of small houses need not be broken. It would also admit of a single brick party-wall being used in cases where the by-laws now require, and require wisely, the use of one and a half brick external walls. The main charm, however, of treating party-walls in a division by themselves would be that it would enable the local authorities in many cases to say: “You have laid out your streets with ample space, in accord with Division B; you will comply with the sanitary requirements of Division F; separate your houses properly with party-walls, as Division D, and we will trouble you no further; for it is impossible to see how you can be any nuisance or danger to your neighbours, and we will trouble you no more with by-laws.” Taking such a position with small properties, or with pairs of workmen's cottages or villas, particularly in the country, would be a great relief to everyone, and do much, very much, to obviate the ill-feeling which now constantly arises from insisting on useless trifles merely for the sake of enforcing the by-laws, as if that in itself were a good and wholesome thing; an opinion only too likely to grow into a fossil in the official mind.

Again, I would insist on the alterations named under Division E on page 452, whereby in a story in a roof, and in the story immediately below the roof (not being a ground story), timber construction and weather tiling or plastering is allowed in place of brick in detached or semi-detached domestic buildings, and also that some credit respecting the thickness of the wall should be given for the tiles in weather tiling nailed to brickwork. Admirable, warm,

sound, and picturesque construction, very characteristic of some parts of the country, is being thrust out of use, not because it is defective or has been found wanting, but from pure ignorance, and because the by-laws were founded on the London Building Act. This was primarily a piece of panic legislation after the Great Fire, and directed, and rightly directed, against fire in a town crowded in a way we can hardly now realise. Many of its provisors are inapplicable where wind or rain, which are certain, are far more formidable than the very rare fire which soon burns itself out. The London Act landed us with Gower Street and Harley Street as the normal types of building. It is not for architects to acquiesce in the same sort of thing happening all over the country through the abolition of local characteristic styles of building.

Finally, let us ask the local authorities to remember that it is local government they have to administer; that they exist, not for the enforcement of a set of by-laws, whether they be useless or not, but for the good of the community; and that their office will be best promoted in the matter of building when they carry with them the intelligent goodwill of those that build; which they certainly will not attain by curtailing unnecessarily the liberty of the subject.

DISCUSSION.

Mr. W. M. FAWCETT, M.A., F.S.A., *Vice-President R.I.B.A.*, in the Chair.

The Secretary R.I.B.A. read the following communication from Mr. WILLIAM HENMAN [F.] of Birmingham:—

"Having had the opportunity of perusing an advance copy of the remarks which Mr. Lacy W. Ridge has drawn up for to-morrow's meeting, I desire to record my appreciation thereof and to congratulate Mr. Ridge upon the very concise and temperate manner in which he has stated the case. Although it may be some time ere local authorities realise their true responsibilities in the matter of building by-laws, I feel sure that the excellent work done by the committee appointed by the Institute will in due course effect improvement; but it is a matter which must constantly be kept to the front, and reform must persistently be urged in official quarters as opportunities occur. A few years ago the city of Birmingham adopted new building by-laws which, among other things, required greater thickness of walls than had previously been employed. Building-owners protested, but no relaxation was granted until the city authorities themselves determined to erect some artisans' dwellings. They then realised that such could not be built to pay, and had to adopt the undignified proceeding of sending a deputation to the Local Government Board to petition for a modification of their own by-laws. This is one of numerous illustrations which might be given in proof that many a building by-law is framed or administered regardless of the public welfare."

The CHAIRMAN said that, as Mr. T. W. Russell had remarked, there was always the difficulty with headquarters of calling forth the jealousy of the local authorities; but it was curious that the local authorities should be jealous of the architect. When one came to carry out the by-laws,

what seemed so strange was that one should be so bound and tied down to the exact letter, and not to the spirit of the by-laws. It seemed to him that what was wanting in a revised set of by-laws was a clause making it possible to give a certain amount of freedom in certain cases. The local authorities should have power to relax their requirements so long as the spirit of the by-laws was adhered to.

Mr. RIDGE said that the local authorities were not bound in the least.

Mr. LEWIS ANGELL [F.] said the Local Government Board did not allow any discretion, but sometimes local authorities would not take proceedings against those who infringed the by-laws; they shut their eyes.

Mr. RIDGE said he had received a letter from a member from the North, who wrote to the Local Government Board suggesting to them that they should cause some local authority, in which he was interested, to enforce their by-laws. The reply he got was that the Local Government Board had taken legal opinion on the subject, and they found that they had no power to compel the local authorities to enforce their by-laws.

Mr. RALPH NEVILL [F.] said the subject was one of the utmost importance to members who practised in the country and the provinces. Their London friends did not always appreciate the great difficulty those who practised in the country had to contend against in this matter. He trusted the Conference would press on the Institute the need of getting some settlement of this matter which would be satisfactory. No Government department could ever be got to do anything unless it was constantly worried. Permanent officials were content to let things go on as they were. If

the Institute represented the architects of the country it was necessary that the members of the Council should remember the extreme importance of this question to provincial architects. The Institute must not weary in the matter, and in a case in which the interests of the profession were so much concerned they must continue to work and get something satisfactory settled. The by-laws were quite as offensive to the British public as they were to the architects. The *Spectator* had printed letters for months on the subject, and the whole country concerned with building was alive to the trouble caused by the by-laws, and was anxious for something to be done. It had been said that the local authorities were jealous of any interference. That was not the fact, because, in his experience, they were willing to adopt a modified scheme of simple by-laws which would be suitable to little country districts; and on applying to the Local Government Board for ratification to do so they had been informed that the Board would not ratify such by-laws, and that the whole by-laws must be taken, or none at all. These by-laws were drawn up by London architects familiar with London and not with country methods. Some of the provisions were childish. It seemed to him that, as Mr. Ridge had said, they should not ask at present for anything that would involve new legislation, but should work on the lines of the Report sent in to the Local Government Board, and so at once get them to relieve local authorities from enforcing the requirements in certain cases. Where there was a sensible chairman and surveyor many things were not insisted on, and the way they got out of the difficulty was to say nothing about any departure from the by-laws. But that put a great responsibility on an architect who might advise a client to take no notice of the rules of the Board. The law was sometimes put in action unexpectedly. Again, a surveyor might permit certain deviations from the by-laws, whereas his successor would not—an experience which had been his (the speaker's). He hoped that this matter would be pressed forward, and that the Local Government Board would have no rest until something satisfactory were done in the matter.

Mr. MAURICE B. ADAMS [F.] said it would be wiser to concentrate the attention of the public on the practical rather than the artistic side of the question, because in the first instance it was clear that very little support would be received in respect to anything which mainly had to do with the artistic side of the matter; but with practical considerations the ordinary man in the street would realise exactly what they wanted, and architects would be more likely to obtain a hearing. By-laws which were framed for the control of urban buildings were often now strictly enforced in parts of parishes far removed from such conditions, and rules were applied in a

hard and fast way which rendered the by-laws unreasonable, inflicting hardships without any corresponding advantage. Mr. ADAMS quoted an instance within his own knowledge, wherein he had lately been obliged to carry out some sanitary work on a country job in Surrey in a way contrary to his better judgment and the requirements of his client.

Mr. CHARLES HADFIELD [F.] said he hoped the Institute Council would not hesitate to use its influence in the matter. It was desirable that the authorities and their advisers should read between the lines regarding the hard and fast enforcing of these by-laws. Those of them who lived in large Midland and Northern towns where there were insanitary areas, knew that there were many poor people who could not pay more than three shillings a week for rent, and houses for them could not be built under the circumstances and let at such a rent. At Sheffield the local authorities had, on the urgent representation of the Sheffield Society of Architects and Surveyors, done something in this direction. They had not accomplished much, but still something had been done. The cost of cottage property for the very poor was, notwithstanding, becoming too great for the rents that the poor were able to pay, and this had an adverse effect on the question of the housing of the poor. It was an aspect of the question that should be pressed home on the authorities.

Mr. A. E. SAWDAY [F.] said architects were not a mercenary body; still they should look at the financial aspect of the matter. Someone had said that day that architects were supposed to be paid for copies of their plans; that was correct in the abstract, but not absolutely, for in consequence of these by-laws the cost of preparing plans was so considerable that clients were driven away from the architect to the builder. An architect often found it necessary in cases of small alterations to make an actual survey of the whole of the property, and the cost was such that work was deflected to the builder. He felt the matter should be looked at from this point of view. It was especially desirable to get by-laws which would be applicable to the district in which a building was located. The difficulty was not so much in the large towns, but in the villages surrounding them. For instance, they had more difficulty in getting plans passed for buildings near Leicester than in Leicester itself.

The CHAIRMAN said, as to the discretion allowed to local authorities and the proposal to make it general, he thought there was a clause in the Sheffield by-laws allowing a certain discretion. The principle involved was that these districts had local self-government; but if that were so they ought to have some discretionary power. In fact it ceased to be self-government if they had none. It must not be forgotten that the position of surveyor to a local authority was often a very difficult

one. A local surveyor once said to him: "I do not want to stop this; it is not at all to my interests to do so. What I take care of is that if I see anything contrary to the by-laws I just report it to my committee, and they can do what they like in the matter. I do that in order to safeguard myself against being called to account subsequently." That was the position; the surveyors did not want to push things to the extreme; it was the awkwardness of the local authorities. As a member of the Council of the Institute he would do his best to see that the matter did not rest.

Mr. RIDGE, in reply, said that local authorities were influenced by local architects. Architects should not be content with the old cry: Why does not the Council of the Institute do something in the matter? The Council of the Institute had had a great deal of negative abuse thrown at it in that way. But the Council was not the body to move in such a matter; if anything could be done it must be done by the members. They had heard

about the poor in towns being driven and crowded together; but the poor were being driven out of the country because the man who might build dwellings in country districts, viz. the country squire, who had been building suitably and as he liked for many years, would not submit to interference because some village or little town in the neighbourhood had taken to itself "urban powers." As to Mr. Henman's point about the Birmingham Council having to petition the Local Government Board, that was not the position of the ordinary local authority, who could make a by-law altering and repealing a previous by-law, though that by-law could not be enforced until the Local Government Board consented. Whatever the idea of the authorities might be, the Act of Parliament stated that the by-laws should be made by the local authorities.

The CHAIRMAN said that he understood that any ratepayer who felt himself aggrieved by an infringement of the by-laws could take action against the local authority in the matter.

THE EMPLOYMENT OF BOROUGH ENGINEERS AND SURVEYORS IN THE DESIGN AND ERECTION OF MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS.

IN response to suggestions from various Architectural Societies allied to the Institute, that the question of the employment of borough engineers or surveyors in the design and erection of municipal buildings should be submitted for discussion at the Congress, the General Committee referred the matter to a small sub-committee, with the result that a series of resolutions were framed, and Mr. Charles Hadfield, of Sheffield, and Mr. A. E. Sawday, of Leicester, consented to bring the subject forward at the Congress. The resolutions were as follows:—

1. *That in the interests of the art of architecture it is inexpedient that buildings of a municipal character be designed and supervised by engineers or surveyors having no architectural training and experience.*
2. *That as a matter of sound finance and in the interests of ratepayers, it is desirable that the duties of the borough engineer and surveyor should not include work of an architectural character.*
3. *That it is detrimental to the interests of the architectural profession that buildings of a municipal character should be designed and erected by the borough engineer and surveyor.*

The matter came before the Congress at the final meeting, Mr. W. M. Fawcett, *Vice-President R.I.B.A.*, being in the Chair.

Mr. CHAS. HADFIELD [F.], who moved the first Resolution, said:—I do not think the resolution needs many words of mine to ensure it a sympathetic reception from a representative meeting of architects within these walls, to which cling memories of so many great architects, whose names and deeds are inscribed on the roll of honour of this Royal Institute. I need only cite *inter alia* Cockerell, Barry, Pennethorne, Butterfield, Scott, Street, and William Burges, that admirable, learned, and accomplished man.

To the older members of the Institute, who, like myself, have listened, as enthusiastic students, to their voices in the past, these names should be, at a time like the present (which many of us regard as one of crisis and difficulty), a call to action in all matters which concern the safeguarding and enhancement of the art of architecture—that art whose evidence, as all history teaches, will have no small weight in the judgment which posterity will form of the British Empire of the nineteenth century.

In moving this Resolution it is far from my intention to utter any words of disparagement of the work of the civil engineer, or of the land surveyor, whose calling, like our own, demands the

exercise of high skill and ability, and who are both engaged in work of the first importance to the common good, much of it, moreover, being work which calls for sympathy and co-operation with that which is peculiarly the province of the architect.

I need scarcely allude in this connection to the laying out of estates for building, and the formation and improvement of the arteries of our rapidly growing towns and cities, work on whose success the best efforts of the architect's craft are dependent. I would yield to no one in expressing a thorough appreciation of the inventiveness and skill evolved in the carrying out of these public works, or of those great mechanical structures which will, perhaps, form the special distinction of the nineteenth-century engineer. But I fail to comprehend how the training of the civil or municipal engineer, or the land surveyor, and the many diverse duties which fall to his lot, can possibly qualify him to originate or to carry out architectural work of a character high enough to appeal to any man or woman of average culture, in an age when appreciation of great works of the architect is considered a part of a polite education. I define good architectural work to be that which is the peculiarly artistic outcome of skilful planning and sound construction. Both equally appertain to a plain building devoid of what are popularly styled "architectural features," and to a highly elaborated building—and I venture to submit that you cannot expect to get individuality, originality, and interesting design without a well-ordered plan. I think, too, you will also agree with me that these qualifications cannot be attained by the aid of "ghostly agency." Beyond all question "municipal buildings of a public character," such as town halls, public baths and libraries, hospitals, police and fire brigade stations, markets and industrial dwellings, demand the particular skill of the architect, whose especial province it should be to impress upon these works the marks of his intimate study of planning and design—and of that individuality which can never appertain to official architecture. With all our shortcomings this individuality has been recognised by foreign critics to be a distinctive quality of the best modern English architecture. I feel strongly that the system of conducting important building operations which has commended itself to the British public for the last fifty years, and which is now undoubtedly bidding for an increased sphere of influence, ought to be discountenanced, as being at variance alike with common sense and public utility. It is a system which is not tolerated by enlightened public opinion on the Continent, and I am glad to learn, on the authority of the *Builder*, that the American Institute of Architects has been taking concerted action on this subject for some time past, and with success; for they have brought about a consider-

able reform in the direction of removing architectural work from the control of the official surveyor.

I feel that I am speaking for most of you in expressing my own sympathy with the wide extension of municipal energy, which is one of the great progressive forces of our day, and I think I may fairly say that such a sympathy tends to increase one's regret that the great changes which this municipal enterprise is bringing about should result in unconsciously lowering the standard of national architecture, instead of being the means of fostering it; and that this, too, should happen at a time when, thanks to the educational advances of recent years, a marked increase in skill and originality may be looked for.

Municipal and Governmental enterprise is more intelligently developed in this direction in France, Germany, and elsewhere on the Continent than it is at present in this country, adapting itself, as it does, to the aesthetic feelings of the people at large; and one is glad to note that already the representatives of more than one of our important municipalities are beginning to appreciate the fact. In the Middle Ages, from the time of the social movements of the thirteenth century, the spirit which is actuating our great municipalities to-day was the factor which called into being the best efforts of the architectural craftsman throughout Europe, and made architecture *par excellence* the art of the people, and England from the thirteenth down to the eighteenth century was no exception in this respect, as many of our older towns and hamlets still bear evidence. I regret to say, however, that such evidence, at the inappreciative touch of the surveyor-architect, is becoming a vanishing quantity. The ruin worked in this respect, notably in the last twenty-five years, is known only to those of us who devote our holiday months to looking up the legacy left by a past which appreciated architecture at its true value; and it is against this all-round vulgarising and lowering of the standard of architecture to serve the needs of a grasping, sordid commercialism—never more in evidence than it is to-day—that I have ventured upon these few remarks.

THE SECRETARY R.I.B.A. then read the following communication on the subject from Mr. WILLIAM HENMAN, of Birmingham:—"Although I thoroughly appreciate the intentions of Mr. Charles Hadfield and Mr. A. E. Sawday in directing the attention of the Institute to the subject of the employment of engineers and surveyors to local authorities on works of architectural character (as I did at the Congress meeting held two years ago at Birmingham), I can but regret that greater care was not exercised in the wording of the resolutions, for they certainly do not exactly explain facts as they stand, or the objects we, as architects, should aim at; and consequently our intentions and aims are liable to be misunderstood and

may be frustrated should the resolutions be adopted in their present form. In the first place, it is unreasonable that we should hold that 'it is inexpedient that buildings of a municipal character be designed and erected by engineers or surveyors.' I am aware that the resolution goes on to say 'having no architectural training,' but is that necessary for the erection of a public urinal or dust destructor? and yet those are buildings of a 'municipal character.' Again, is it becoming on the part of the Institute of British Architects to dictate what work should be entrusted to engineers and surveyors? Might not independent engineers and surveyors justly resent such interference with what they may consider their legitimate work—work which I think all of us will agree might just as well be carried out without the necessity for previously undergoing 'architectural training'? In the second and third resolutions I also submit that the term 'borough engineer and surveyor' is now antiquated. We have city engineers and surveyors and engineers and surveyors to district councils, but the term 'borough' is practically obsolete in connection with the appointment of engineers and surveyors. Without further criticising the wording of the resolutions, I beg to suggest the following, which in my humble opinion fairly embraces the three which have been printed, and reasonably conveys the views of the architectural profession on the subject, viz.:—

'That it is detrimental to the cause of architecture as an art, to the interests of the rate-paying public as a matter of sound finance, and to the architectural profession as a specially-trained body, for salaried engineers or surveyors to local authorities to be employed in the design and superintendence of buildings requiring architectural education and experience.

I may further point out that the above wording also embraces a point of great importance to the architectural profession, which is not included within the terms of the three resolutions as printed; that is, the evil arising from salaried engineers and surveyors undertaking private work of architectural character, whereby, in consequence of their official position, they become unduly favoured competitors with trained members of the architectural profession. I regret that my engagements prevent me being present at the discussion, and that circumstances have interfered with an exchange of views between Messrs. Hadfield, Sawday, and myself. I feel convinced we all hold the same opinions upon the subject in the abstract; we realise the evils resulting from the employment of salaried engineers and surveyors for work requiring architectural learning and skill; consequently, the only difference between

us is, in what words shall the subject-matter be placed on record before the public? With all deference to those who framed the three resolutions, I hold that the one I have presumed to put forward not only states the facts correctly, but expresses clearly the opinion of those in the architectural profession who have given thought to the matter, and I appeal to the movers of the resolutions to accept the revised wording. In addition, I express the hope that the Institute will not permit the matter to rest with this pious expression of opinion, but that a committee may be appointed to investigate and obtain particulars respecting the numerous works of architectural character with which salaried engineers and surveyors have during the last ten to twenty years been entrusted, their cost compared with those of similar character designed by trained architects, and their relative architectural characteristics, for I feel sure that a committee, working on the same business lines as the one which was appointed to consider the Building By-laws, would do much to enlighten the public upon the subject and materially help to put a stop to an evil practice."

Mr. C. H. BRODIE [A.] said the position was a little extraordinary, but he should be glad to second Mr. Henman's motion, because he felt it was very much better than the three printed resolutions. At the same time, he should be sorry to cast any slur on the framers of the three resolutions. If the three resolutions could be withdrawn and Mr. Henman's substituted he thought it would clear the ground.

Mr. LEWIS ANGELL [F.] said he thought they must all agree with resolution No. 1, which was complete and sufficient in itself. Speaking as a borough engineer of many years' standing, he thought it desirable that engineers should not carry out architectural work unless they had had architectural training. The first resolution went quite as far as Mr. Henman's amendment, and was much simpler. If he should desire to amend it, it would be in order to require that architects holding the position of borough engineer should not carry out engineering work without engineering training and experience. It was no uncommon thing in provincial appointments for a local architect to compete for the appointment of borough engineer, and he knew of local architects appointed borough engineers who had undertaken such work as the construction of drainage, the result of which had been a conspicuous failure, simply because such work did not come within an architect's experience. If it were necessary to express any opinion at all, why should they go beyond resolution No. 1? No. 2 was a conundrum, and the third was a trades-union proposition.

Mr. H. H. STATHAM [F.] said he wished to oppose Mr. Henman's amendment, as it included some of the proposals belonging to the second and third resolutions, which proposals he thought it

desirable to reject. It seemed to him that there was some misunderstanding and some not quite fortunate wording in regard to the first resolution. He thought the real object of the first resolution was a purely artistic one, and, as they should bear in mind, it was intended to suggest that architecture should not be put into the hands of the municipal official. He thought that was most important, because it would generally be found that they were not architects of original genius who tried for these official positions, but practical men with a good deal of surveying knowledge. If a man of original genius did ever get into such a position, he almost inevitably had his genius weakened; that was to say, he got entirely wrapped up in routine work. He heard that most strongly put by one of the leading Academy architects, Mr. T. G. Jackson. A man's genius suffered in such an appointment. Examples of this could be seen in the Post Office buildings, which were by no means the worst examples. As was known, the Post Office buildings all over the country were designed in the Office of Works, and, notwithstanding the fact that there was a very able architect in the Office of Works, the stamp of officialism was all over those buildings; whereas had the work of designing and erecting those buildings been given to a leading architect in each town, each building would have been an original work of architecture, with perhaps some local character about it. Instead of that, they were all designed in the official mould, and in every large town in the country there was one of these machine-made buildings, which, though not without some claim to respectability, were commonplace and uninteresting architecture. That was the sort of thing they wanted to avoid. It seemed to him that if the first resolution stated, "should not be designed and erected by engineers and surveyors holding official appointments," that would put more correctly what architects wanted; and in order to meet another objection they might insert the word "important" before "buildings of a municipal character." He thought that some alteration of this kind would express better what they had in their minds. He distinctly opposed Mr. Henman's amendment, because it seemed to introduce a trades-union element, and they did not want to be making a protest in favour of their own pockets, though they did want to make a protest in the best interests of architectural art.

Mr. LACY W. RIDGE [F.] said Mr. Henman's proposal was a good one for getting together the three resolutions in one, but the amendment would have to be proposed by someone in person, and he did not feel able to do so.

The CHAIRMAN said that he must rule that inasmuch as the amendment by Mr. Henman had not been proposed they must proceed to discuss resolution No. 1.

Mr. H. HARDWICKE LANGSTON [A.] said he was not in sympathy with any of the resolutions. The first resolution was a contradiction in itself, for engineers and surveyors who designed and carried out buildings of a municipal character must clearly have the ability to do so, and whether that ability were called the result of architectural training or not was really a matter of trifling importance. As to the intention and spirit of the resolution, if it meant anything it meant and was intended to convey that engineers and surveyors were to be written down as men incompetent and unfit to be entrusted with designing and carrying out buildings, which buildings were to be paid for out of the ratepayers' purse. Was it their place to lay down such an axiom as that? But the resolution was far-reaching, including all engineers and surveyors possessing the indefinite, doubtful qualification which, for want of a better term, was called architectural training. Before they could lay down an axiom of such severity it was necessary to prove that by a so-called architectural training there was conferred upon a man that fulness of discernment and power of mind to enable him to cope with the problem proposed; but there could be no such proof, and without an inborn and intuitive love for the art of architecture all the architectural training one could cram into a lifetime was of little avail. That being so, what was there left of the resolution to commend itself to them? Let them suppose a case where a man with an inborn and intuitive love of architecture, but technically trained and taught, found himself, without employment in the art he loved, driven to accept a borough surveyorship. Suppose he were driven to that. Was the fact of the acceptance of that appointment to prevent him making his position a stepping-stone into the practice of an architect, if luck and opportunity afforded an opening in that direction? If so, what became of the liberty of the subject? He ventured to say that patriotism and necessity were not to be stopped in their progress by such a punctilious recommendation.

Mr. MAURICE B. ADAMS [F.] said that Mr. Statham had made some remarks with which he was in agreement, and he suggested that Mr. Statham should move an amendment to Resolution No. 1 embodying those remarks.

Mr. STATHAM said he had already written down the following amendment, viz.: "That in the interests of architecture it is inexpedient that important buildings of a municipal character be designed and erected by the Official Engineer or Surveyor to the Municipality."

Mr. ADAMS seconded.

Mr. HADFIELD said that if the word "important" were omitted he should cordially support the suggestion. It took a man a lifetime to make a good plan of an important building, as they realised in that important building which they

had just visited, viz. the new cathedral at Westminster.

Mr. STATHAM said he was afraid he could not agree to omit the word. It was put in to answer a perfectly logical objection, that by the original motion the city or borough engineer would be prevented carrying out such a work as a urinal. The word "important" showed that they meant buildings of architectural importance.

Mr. ADAMS concurred. Buildings, he urged, were put up by engineers and surveyors in various parts of the country—by men who were often little more than road-surveyors. In an important town less than sixty miles from London a large town hall had recently been very considerably altered by the official surveyor, and it now stood a monument of ugliness. Other like examples within the range of Greater London could easily be mentioned. Surely those of them who had any love for the art of architecture should protest. There was no endeavour on the part of the architects to get "a cut in" against the borough or town surveyor or the official "architect," but if they had any sense of beauty of architecture, surely it was their business to exercise their influence, which possibly might not be very great, to bring about the desired change in the interests of art throughout the country. The essential qualifications and consequent training of those who occupied with the most success the position of municipal surveyor were detrimental to artistic conceptions, and by the very nature of things the special duties and surroundings which governed the work of an engineering official to a township or central authority must of necessity be incompatible with the production of both architectural planning and beauty in design. To emphasise the force of this argument the speaker urged that it would be almost less incongruous to commission artistic architects to undertake ordinary road or street making and other kindred work instead of employing engineering surveyors.

Mr. LEWIS ANGELL [F.] said he did not suppose the amendment, if agreed to, would have the desired effect, for the local authorities of the country would do what they pleased; but it would have the effect of creating a feeling on the part of the borough engineers of the country against the architects. In his opinion Resolution No. 1 as an expression of opinion would be sufficient. By the amendment borough engineers who were members of the Institute would be excluded from doing important architectural work; it was an attack on every borough surveyor, whatever his qualifications.

Mr. BRODIE suggested that Resolution No. 1 should be put, with the addition of the word "important" before "buildings of municipal character."

Mr. ANGELL said that would open up a discussion as to what was important. He had been a

borough engineer for forty years, and during that time he had carried out town halls, fire stations, lunatic asylums, and other large works—probably, owing to his long service, more buildings than any other municipal engineer in the country. There were several members of the Institute who held similar appointments, and for the sake of peace, and in order not to give offence to a large and important body of men in the country, it would not be wise to throw down the gauntlet.

Mr. RIDGE said he was not agreed even with Resolution No. 1. An outsider reading it would, he feared, think it had taste on their part to agree to such a resolution; and what was more, he did not think that any attention would be given to it even if it were passed. He therefore ventured to move the previous question.

Mr. E. W. HUDSON seconded as an Associate of the Institute. The resolution, if passed, would be a dead letter. He could not see, while there were members of the Institute who were borough engineers and surveyors, that any good would be done by curtailing their powers and work until they, with all other practitioners, were alike subjected to a tribunal of taste. The profession seemed to be so dovetailed in with other matters that it would be as pertinent for civil and sanitary engineers to say that the architect should have nothing to do with the drainage of buildings, and that the engineer should be called in for the purpose. In spite of all their love for the art they could not forget that it was a profession also.

Mr. LANGSTON, in supporting the previous question, said the matter was of such importance that he would like the members of the profession to be canvassed on the subject.

Mr. RALPH NEVILL [F.] said they must all feel that it was undesirable for men without architectural training to meddle in architectural work, but the matter was a very difficult one to deal with, and it was difficult to decide what "important" meant. He felt that, should they pass these resolutions, they would provoke an unpleasant *tu quoque*, for there was no doubt that some architects were guilty of the very worst buildings possible; there was no borough in England where one could not point to some very bad works by architects. On the whole, in spite of the great good which might result in passing these resolutions, he thought it would be better to let the matter alone. On explanation Mr. Nevill subsequently voted against Mr. Ridge's motion.

Mr. J. D. MOULD [F.] said that even those opposed to the resolutions seemed to be agreed as to the inadvisability of buildings of a municipal character being designed and erected by engineers and surveyors, yet in order not to awaken opposition in other quarters it was thought better not to press the matter. That was a spirit which might prevent them moving in almost any direc-

tion. The resolution was a true statement of fact, and if there were a possibility of its doing good it should be passed. He was in perfect agreement with the terms of the resolution. It was to the honour of the Institute that it had always approached these questions, not as a trades-union body, but in the interests of architecture. It was not intended to slight the municipal engineers—men of great qualifications, who had such diverse duties to attend to, and who had a very strong association, viz. the Association of Municipal and County Engineers. The Municipal Engineers' Association could pass a similar resolution against architects if they liked, to the effect that architects should be debarred from carrying out engineering work, and if they did he would be perfectly ready to agree to it. He thought it would be well for the Institute to throw aside any fear of awakening animosities, and, with perfect self-respect, in a proper spirit of protection, and with an eye to the good of the general body, to pass the resolutions.

The motion having been put and declared lost,

Mr. STATHAM said that another reason why he felt that his resolution should be agreed to was that architectural work for a municipality would be thrown open to competition, with the chance of getting the best result. That was done in France, where there were a number of official architects connected with all sorts of departments, but who were never entrusted with the designs for great buildings. The thing was thrown open to competition in order to get the best building.

Mr. HADFIELD said he desired to adopt Mr. Statham's wording.

The CHAIRMAN then put the amendment to the meeting, when there voted fourteen for it, and five against. It was then put as a substantive motion and carried.

Mr. LANGSTON asked if the votes of nineteen people would settle such a matter, and as a protest against that he should leave the meeting.

Mr. A. E. SAWDAY [F.], of Leicester, then moved the second resolution, which, he said, dealt with the same class as No. 1, viz. those who had had no special architectural training. A letter which appeared in *The Builder* for 9th June was evidently written under a misconception of the spirit of the resolutions. The resolutions were not aimed at those who, like the writer of that letter, evidently possessed special architectural knowledge, but those engineers and surveyors who could and would not themselves claim such knowledge. Probably nine out of ten borough engineers and surveyors would not claim to have special architectural knowledge. Most of those present would probably differ from the writer of that letter when he said that a borough engineer had included in his training a study of architecture as deep in its practical form as that of any architect. Most engineers possessed, and should possess, a certain amount

of architectural knowledge, just as an architect should possess a knowledge of strength of materials, strains, &c., necessary for him safely to carry through his work. Nor was the resolution aimed at the carrying-out by engineers of that class of municipal buildings which might be regarded as closely identified with sanitary and other engineering work, viz. destructors, electric light installation, gasworks, and other kindred works; but it referred to those works of a purely architectural character requiring that amount of architectural and technical knowledge which an architect should possess to a greater extent than a man whose time was chiefly devoted to works of an altogether different class, and whose thoughts were directed in a different channel. The interests of the rate-payers required that the work done by the municipality should fully serve the purpose intended; should be thoroughly well planned, constructed, and superintended; and, what would perhaps be regarded by them as the chief matter, carried out at a minimum of cost; and it was suggested by the resolution that these results were best obtained by the employment of a trained and qualified architect rather than by a borough engineer. The first two points were best illustrated by the experience of the municipality which he had the honour to represent. The municipality of Leicester possessed a thoroughly capable borough engineer, and yet a few years ago it was decided to entrust all purely architectural works to independent architects, perhaps prompted by the fact that the town possessed an exceedingly capable body of architects, a fact which he might state without any egotism, since, as a member of the Leicester Council, he had been debarred from taking a share of the work which had fallen to his professional brethren. A great amount of work had been, or was being carried out, viz. fever hospital, asylum buildings, technical and art schools, cemetery with chapels and lodges, crematorium, public baths and free libraries, gas offices, market buildings, industrial dwellings, &c.—all distinct from and having no relation to the work of the borough engineer, but work which in many municipalities was undertaken by the engineer. All this had been attended with the most satisfactory results so far as the ratepayers were concerned. Concurrently with all this a vast amount of sanitary and engineering work had been carried out by the borough engineer and his staff, viz. new main sewage scheme and pumping stations; laying out sewage farm of 1,400 acres; bridges; refuse destructors, &c. Their borough surveyor, able as he undoubtedly was, would not be able, with this and other work appertaining to the office on his hands, to give to those purely architectural works the personal attention they deserved. If carried out by the borough engineer's department, the work would necessarily devolve upon a subordinate, with, generally speaking, unsatisfactory results.

Even the time he would be able to give to such work would be time which ought to be given to matters more immediately demanding his attention, and which, in consequence, would devolve on a subordinate, and both branches of the work would suffer for the lack of that personal attention which both demanded. All architects, it was true, were not worthy, and some were not as scrupulous as they might be, but such cases were few and far between. The five per cent. saved when the work was carried out by an official was not a saving in reality—the small margin of profit made by the architect and the payments to subordinates equalised that account. Again, borough engineers approached architectural work from the standpoint from which they regarded their own, and not always with regard for the best and most economical use of materials. He knew a case where a building erected under the supervision of an engineer had the walls thirty per cent. to fifty per cent. thicker than would have been regarded as necessary by an architect after having due and proper regard for safety of construction. The five per cent. commission was saved, but it was quite accounted for by the extra cost of building. Demands on municipalities increased from year to year; works carried out by them were increasing in number and importance, and the demands on the time of their officers correspondingly increasing; and for those reasons he thought that works requiring the architectural knowledge which the architect should possess should be carried out by him in the truest interests of the public. There was room for architect and engineer to work side by side, aiding and assisting

each other, neither jealous of the other, but each attending to his proper functions and the work to which each had been specially trained.

Mr. STATHAM said they had all been pleased to hear the views of Mr. Sawday, but he did not think that, as architects, they had anything to do with considering municipal finance or the interests of the ratepayers. He felt that the resolution that had been passed was in the right direction, viz. the interests of architecture; but the second resolution was going into things which did not concern the Architectural Congress. In passing the first resolution they had done all that they could for their cause, and he therefore moved that the resolution before them be not considered.

Mr. ANGELL, in seconding, asked what was the use of piling up the agony with three resolutions? The gauntlet was being once more thrown down in the suggestion made in the resolution as to sound finance. The same suggestion might be made by borough engineers and surveyors about architects. Having passed the first resolution it was unnecessary to do more.

The Chairman then put the amendment to the meeting, and it was agreed to.

In reference to the third resolution, Mr. HADFIELD said he was sorry that Mr. Joseph Smith, the President of the Sheffield Society, was not present. He believed that Mr. Smith's strong feeling was that the third resolution was quite unnecessary, and he, the speaker, ventured to take the responsibility of saying that there was no necessity for it at all.

It was then agreed that the resolution be withdrawn.



